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# **THE AMERICAN POSTAL SERVICE**

## **History of the Postal Service from the Earliest Times**

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**The American System Described with Full Details  
of Operation**

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**A Fund of Interesting Information upon All Postal Subjects**

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**By**  
**LOUIS MELIUS**  
**Washington, D. C.**

## Biographical Sketches of the Postmaster General and His Four Assistants

Albert Sidney Burleson, of Austin, Tex., Postmaster General, was born June 7, 1863, at San Marcos, Tex.; was educated at Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, Baylor University (of Waco), and University of Texas. Was admitted to the bar in 1884; was Assistant City Attorney of Austin in 1885, '86, '87, '88, '89 and '90; was appointed by the Governor of Texas, Attorney of the Twenty-Sixth Judicial District in 1891; was elected to said office, 1892, '94 and '96; was elected to the 56th, 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th, 61st, 62d, and 63d Congresses; appointed Postmaster General March 4, 1913, and confirmed March 6, 1913.

John C. Koons, First Assistant Postmaster General, entered the service as a Railway Postal Clerk; was transferred to Washington and made Post Office Inspector, subsequently made Chief of the Division of Salaries and Allowances and member of the Parcel Post Commission, in which latter connection his services were considered of especial value and importance. Appointed Chief Post Office Inspector and upon the resignation of the late First Assistant Postmaster General, Daniel C. Roper, was named to succeed him. His legal residence is in Carroll Co., Md.

Otto Praeger, Second Assistant Postmaster General, was born in Victoria, Tex., 1871. Legal residence, San Antonio, Tex. Took a course of instruction in the University of Texas and was a student on political economy under David F. Houston now Secretary of Agriculture. Engaged in the newspaper business at San Antonio in 1887—*San Antonio Light* and *San Antonio Express*; was for a time city clerk of said city; was engaged in newspaper work as Washington correspondent when appointed Postmaster of Washington, D. C., and in August, 1915, was appointed Second Assistant to succeed Hon. Joseph Stewart.

Alexander Monroe Dockery, Third Assistant Postmaster General, is a native of Missouri, born in Daviess County, educated at Macon Academy; studied medicine, graduated and practiced it for a while but later engaged in the banking business. Served in Congress from March 3, 1883, to March 3, 1899. Member of Committee of Appropriations, twelve years; Committee Post-Offices and Post Roads, four years; Governor of Missouri from 1901 to 1905; was author of the bill extending the special delivery system to all post offices; also extending free delivery service to small cities; advocated the first appropriation for rural delivery. Chairman of the commission which bore his name, constituted by Congress for administrative reforms in the conduct of public business, and author of the act creating a new accounting system for the Treasury Department and many other public measures which have made his name familiar to the public and political life of the country.

James I. Blakslee, Fourth Assistant Postmaster General, was born at Mauch Chunk, Pa., December 17, 1870. Public school education, supplemented with special courses at Bethlehem Preparatory School, Cheltenham Military Academy and High School, Pottstown, Pa.; was connected with the Lehigh Valley and Pennsylvania railroads as telegraph operator and assistant yardmaster; Lieutenant, Company E, Eighth Regiment, National Guards, 1897; commissioned same rank and regiment, U. S. Volunteers, and appointed quartermaster and commissary, Reserve Hospital Corps, U. S. Army, during the Spanish-American War. Removed to Lehighton in 1899. Chairman Democratic Committee of Carbon County, 1905. Assemblyman. Pennsylvania Legislature, 1907-09 term, and subsequently made Secretary Democratic State Committee, where his organizing ability won him national recognition.



## PREFACE

This little work on postal affairs aims to familiarize postal employes and others with the operations of the Post Office Department in all its varied and numerous details. No attempt was made to cover the wide field of postal activity and inquiry for which a much larger book and much greater space would be required. It is simply meant to be a book of reference, a sort of hand-book on postal subjects for busy people who may not care to read lengthy accounts or stories which a few paragraphs might sufficiently explain, or care to wrestle with columns of figures which are best given in official reports and chiefly valuable to public men for legislative purposes, for comparison and survey.

All necessary postal knowledge of immediate public interest is herein set forth in such compact shape as to acquaint the reader with what he might want to know, or direct his inquiry to sources of wider information if the desire was not satisfied with the reference thereto which this work might afford. In general it will be found amply sufficient for all ordinary purpose as the scope of subjects is as wide as the active operations of the Department at present include.

The special articles referring to subjects of general postal interest cover a considerable range of inquiry and deal more fully with those matters which are but briefly mentioned in that portion devoted to the purely business details of the Department. Much of this material is new and all of it treated so as to interest the reader. These articles on general postal topics in connection with the other matter herewith given, relating to the service, may please some one here and there and perhaps justify the publication of this little contribution to the literature of the time.

L. M.

Washington, D. C.

March 15, 1917.

*This is some  
sentiment*

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To Mr. Ruskin McArdle, late Private Secretary to the Postmaster General, now Chief Clerk of the Department, whose friendly regard I have long enjoyed and whose courteous and considerate treatment to all with whom his official relations have brought him into contact, this little volume is respectfully dedicated as a mark of appreciation and a token of deep and lasting esteem.

THE AUTHOR.

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## ORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT

The operations of the postal service are conducted by divisional arrangement with the duties of each accurately and specifically defined. Previous to this administration much of the work of the various bureaus was found to be overlapping each other and exercising a separate authority in correlated matters. These officially related duties were each brought under a proper head, insuring prompt attention and fixing a definite responsibility which has been found to be of recognized benefit and value.

### OFFICE OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL

*Postmaster General.*—ALBERT S. BURLESON, Texas.

*Private Secretary.*—ROBERT E. COWART, Texas.

*Chief Clerk.*—RUSKIN MCARDLE, Texas.

*Assistant Chief Clerk.*—WILLIAM W. SMITH, Tennessee.

*Division of Solicitor.*—

*Solicitor.*—WILLIAM H. LAMAR, Maryland.

*Assistant Attorneys.*—J. JULIEN SOUTHERLAND, North Carolina.

WALTER E. KELLY, Ohio.

EDWIN A. NIESS, Pennsylvania.

JOHN A. NASH, Pennsylvania.

*Bond Examiner.*—HORACE J. DONNELLY, District of Columbia.

*Law Clerk.*—ARTHUR J. KAUSE, Ohio.

*Division of Purchasing Agent.*—

*Purchasing Agent.*—JAMES A. EDGERTON, New Jersey.

*Chief Clerk.*—FREDERICK H. AUSTIN, Missouri.

*Division of Post Office Inspectors.*—

*Chief Inspector.*—GEORGE M. SUTTON, Missouri.

*Chief Clerk.*—J. ROBERT COX, North Carolina.

*Appointment Clerk.*—Vacant.

*Disbursing Clerk.*—WILLIAM M. MOONEY, Ohio.

### OFFICE OF THE FIRST ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL

*First Assistant Postmaster General.*—JOHN C. KOONS, Maryland.

*Chief Clerk.*—JOHN W. JOHNSTON, New York.

*Division of Post Office Service.*—

*Superintendent.*—GOODWIN D. ELLSWORTH, North Carolina.

*Assistant Superintendent.*—WILLIAM S. RYAN, New York.

*Division of Postmasters' Appointments.*—

*Superintendent.*—CHARLES R. HODGES, Texas.

*Assistant Superintendent.*—LOREL N. MORGAN, West Virginia.

*Assistant Superintendent.*—SIMON E. SULLIVAN, Maryland.

*Division of Dead Letters.*—

*Superintendent.*—MARVIN M. MCLEAN, Texas.

### OFFICE OF THE SECOND ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL

*Second Assistant Postmaster General.*—OTTO PRAEGER, Texas.

*Chief Clerk.*—EUGENE R. WHITE, Vermont.

## THE AMERICAN POSTAL SERVICE

### *Division of Railway Mail Service.—*

*General Superintendent.*—WM. I. DENNING, Georgia.

*Assistant General Superintendent.*—GEORGE F. STONE, New York.

*Chief Clerk.*—CHASE C. GOVE, Nebraska.

### *Division of Foreign Mails.—*

*Superintendent.*—ROBERT L. MADDOX, Kentucky.

*Assistant Superintendent.*—STEWART M. WEBER, Pennsylvania.

*Assistant Superintendent at New York.*—EDWIN SANDS, New York.

### *Division of Railway Adjustments.—*

*Superintendent.*—JAMES B. CORRIDON, District of Columbia.

*Assistant Superintendent.*—GEORGE E. BANDEL, Maryland.

### OFFICE OF THE THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL

*Third Assistant Postmaster General.*—ALEXANDER M. DOCKERY, Missouri.

*Chief Clerk.*—WILLIAM J. BARROWS, Missouri.

### *Division of Finances.—*

*Superintendent.*—WILLIAM E. BUFFINGTON, Pennsylvania.

### *Division of Postal Savings.—*

*Director.*—CARTER B. KEENE, Maine.

*Assistant Director.*—CHARLES H. FULLAWAY, Pennsylvania.

*Chief Clerk.*—HARRY H. THOMPSON, Maryland.

### *Division of Money Orders.—*

*Superintendent.*—CHARLES E. MATTHEWS, Oklahoma.

*Chief Clerk.*—F. H. RAINET, District of Columbia.

### *Division of Classification.—*

*Superintendent.*—WILLIAM C. WOOD, Kansas.

### *Division of Stamps.—*

*Superintendent.*—WILLIAM C. FITCH, New York.

### *Division of Registered Mails.—*

*Superintendent.*—LEIGHTON V. B. MARSHALK, Kentucky.

### OFFICE OF THE FOURTH ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL

*Fourth Assistant Postmaster General.*—JAMES I. BLAKSLEE, Pennsylvania.

*Chief Clerk.*—J. KING PICKETT, Alabama.

### *Division of Rural Mails.—*

*Superintendent.*—GEORGE L. WOOD, Maryland.

*Assistant Superintendent.*—EDGAR R. RYAN, Pennsylvania.

*Chief Clerk.*—LANSING M. DOW, New Hampshire.

### *Division of Equipment and Supplies.—*

*Superintendent.*—ALFRED B. FOSTER, California.

*Assistant Superintendent.*—Vacant.

*Chief Clerk.*—Vacant.

### OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR FOR THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

*Auditor.*—CHARLES A. KRAM, Pennsylvania.

*Assistant and Chief Clerk.*—TERRENCE H. SWEENEY, Minnesota.

*Law Clerk.*—FABER STEVENSON, Ohio.

*Expert Accountant.*—LEWIS M. BARTLETT, Massachusetts.

## THE AMERICAN POSTAL SERVICE

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### *Electrical Accounting System.—*

#### *Chiefs of Division.—*

LOUIS BREHM, Illinois.

JOSHUA H. CLARK, Maryland.

JAMES R. WHITE, District of Columbia.

### *Miscellaneous Division.—*

*Chief.*—JASPER N. BAKER, Kansas.

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## LATEST FACTS OF POSTAL INTEREST

### Report of Postmaster General, Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1917

The long continued agitation between the railroads and the Post Office Department over the method of payment for mail transportation is in process of settlement by actual tests. The contention is whether the basis of payment shall be by weight or by the space used. While the space rate is the higher of the two it lends itself to rational readjustment, and is therefore best for government needs. The tests made show a saving of about \$7,000,000 per annum by the space method.

The efficiency standard now required of Postmasters, has it is stated, greatly improved the service and the announced policy of the Department to reappoint all those who render meritorious service has been adhered to and will be continued.

During the year ending June 30, 1917, 98, second class offices were advanced to the first class; 135 third class to second, and 1,203 fourth class to third. Average annual salary of post-office clerks is now \$1,142 per annum, city carriers \$1,126.50.

Removals of employees for cause are now rarely made, statistics show less than one per cent in both the post office and city carrier service.

It is recommended that where because of unusual conditions, rural carriers cannot be obtained at the maximum rate of pay, advertisements be issued calling for proposals for the performance of such service.

Motor vehicle routes are now in operation on a total length of over 41,000 miles, averaging 54 miles per route, at an average cost of \$1,786.49 per route.

There are now 43,463 rural routes in operation, covering 1,112,556 miles. Cost of rural service decreased 0.011 per patron during the year 1917; cost per mile decreased 0.114 cent per mile.

The cost per mile of travel by star-route contractors is \$0.1024. Cost per mile of travel by rural carrier is \$0.1510. This difference in cost is receiving departmental consideration.

Shipment of parcel post packages increased 14 per cent in 1917, the increase representing more than 25,000,000 pieces. Cooperation of postmasters in bringing the insurance feature particularly that of partial damage prominently to public notice, has resulted in an increase of over 8,000,000 insured parcels over the showing of 1916.

Growing carelessness in addressing letter mail resulted in 13,000,000 letters being found undeliverable during 1917, an increase of 21 per cent.

The report shows an audited surplus for the year of \$9,836,211 the largest in the history of the department. The increase over the preceding year was 5.66 per cent, while the increase in cost was 4.45 per cent. The audited revenues for the year amounted to \$329,726,116.

Remarkable growth in postal savings is shown. In 1917 there were 674,728 depositors with a total of \$131,954,696 to their credit. The average balance for each depositor was \$195.57. This was an increase over the previous year of 71,791 in the number of depositors, \$45,934,811 in the amount and \$52.90 in the per capita balance.

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# THE AMERICAN POSTAL SERVICE

## CHAPTER I

### General Postal History

The need of communication was doubtless one of the earliest activities of the Ancient World, not for public use but for government purpose. In Holy Writ we learn that the Israelitish Nation made early use of the means at hand. In the first Book of Kings it is stated that Queen Jezebel wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed with the King's seal, and sent them to the elders and nobles in the city. In the Book of Esther mention is made of sending letters by posts to all the King's provinces. There are also evidences that the Assyrian and Persian nations established stations, or posts a day's journey apart, at which horses were kept ready saddled with waiting couriers for the transmission of public orders and edicts. Xenophon mentions that Cyrus employed posts throughout his dominions and Herodotus speaks of the large structures erected for post stations. The mail service of China dates far back into antiquity. It is said that in the fourteenth century there were 10,000 mail stations in the empire. Peru, remarkable for its early evidences of civilization, had according to the historian Prescott, communication established from one end of the country to the other. There is, however, nothing to show that ordinary human affairs received any attention at this early period, the activities of rulers being devoted entirely to governmental interest and concern. The affairs of commerce and trade were probably carried on by personal enterprise, by voyages of trade discovery by water or expeditions on land.

The method of using couriers for transmitting intelligence was evidently long continued, being the only means known by which such need could be met, or the one which most naturally suggested itself. The Romans employed couriers for the promulgation of military and public orders to their scattered provinces, private letters being sent by slaves or by such opportunity as occasion afforded. It is said that Charlemagne employed couriers for public purposes, but the practice was discontinued after his death, special messengers being used when occasion required. England employed couriers for public purposes in the thirteenth century, and in the fourteenth century Louis XI returned to the practice

of employing mounted couriers and established stations but only for government purposes.

### The Beginning of Personal Communication

As early as the beginning of the thirteenth century the need of personal communication was recognized and the University of Paris arranged for the employment of foot-messengers to bear letters from its thousands of students to the various countries in Europe from whence they came. This plan lasted until 1719. In the fifteenth century an attempt was made and the custom prevailed for some time, of sending letters by traveling tradesmen or dealers who made regular trips in certain directions for barter, purchase or sale. The tremendous stimulus given to the development of commercial conditions by the crusades, made business intercourse necessary, and the post riders who had surplus horses soon found use for them in the conveyance of passengers and ultimately in the transmission of general information which finally resulted in a fixed compensation and which method remained in use for a considerable period.

The real beginning of letter posts for private and business purposes, dates from the year 1516, when Roger, Count of Thurn, established riding posts in the Tyrol, connecting Germany and Italy. A letter post had been established in the Hanse towns in the thirteenth century, but the actual commencement of such activities dates from the year 1516. The Emperor Charles V made these riding posts general throughout his dominions and appointed Leonard, Count of Thurn, his postmaster general. The Counts of Thurn and Taxis held this monopoly by regular succession for many years afterward. The rapid growth of English civilization made postal progress necessary for its people and this brings us to the period of most interest to students as well as the average reader.

### The Postal History of England

As much of our postal system is naturally based on that of England from our early Colonial dependence, it is of interest to note the various steps of English progress and development in connection with the subject.

The first English postmaster general of whom any account can be given was Sir Brian Tuke, who is described on the records of the year 1533 as "Magister Nuncrorum, Cursorum, Sire, Postarum,"

but long subsequent to this appointment of a postmaster general the details of the service were frequently regulated by proclamation and by orders in council. During the earlier years of Queen Elizabeth, most of the business of the postal service to and from England was managed by the incorporated "Merchant Strangers" who appointed special postmasters among themselves.

The accession of James I, necessitating more frequent communication between London and Scotland, led to many improvements in the postal service. It was ordered that the posts should travel not less than 7 miles an hour in summer and 5 miles in winter. In 1619 a separate postmaster general for foreign parts was created. Thomas Witherings was one of the successors in this office and entitled to rank as one of the many conspicuous postal reformers in the continental service. All letters were then carried by carriers or footpads 16 or 18 miles a day. It required two months to get answers from Scotland or Ireland to London. He directed that all northern mail be put into one "portmantle" directed to Edinburgh and separate bags to such postmasters as lived upon the road near to any city or town corporate, which was the first step in the separation of mail since carried to such perfection here and elsewhere.

#### Penny Postage Attempted

The income from the post office in 1643 was but 5,000 pounds. Ultimately the posts both inland and foreign were farmed out to John Manley for 10,000 pounds a year by an agreement made in 1653. About this time an attorney of York, named John Hill, ventured upon the plan of placing relays of post horses between that city and London and undertook to convey letters and parcels at half the former charge. He aimed to establish penny postage for England, two-penny postage for Scotland, and a four-penny postage for Ireland. But the post office was regarded in that day as a means of revenue and incidentally of political espionage and government did not approve of such individual enterprise. His letter carriers were literally trampled down by Cromwell's soldiers, and the enterprising attorney narrowly escaped severe punishment. Another attempt at penny postage for London was established by William Duckwra, a custom house employe, and Robert Murray, a clerk in the excise office. Duckwra carried for a penny and registered and insured, both letters and parcels up to a pound in weight

and \$10 in value. He established hourly collections and ten deliveries daily for the central parts of London and six for the suburbs. The Duke of York had, however, a patent covering this service and suits were laid against him which put an end to his enterprise.

The systematic employment of women in post office and telegraph service was for a long time an experiment and a problem, but it afterwards proved a success. Under new regulations in 1870, women were employed as telegraphists for eight hours daily with pay according to age, intelligence and practical experience. At the close of 1880, there were a thousand women so employed in the cities of London, Edinburgh, and Dublin, and nearly as many in minor postal positions throughout the Kingdom.

#### General Post Office at London

The necessary authority for the establishment of a general post office at London to cover the British dominions, including the American Colonies, was given by act of Parliament in 1657. Under this act the postal affairs of England were conducted for a great length of time with but little if any improvement. It was not until the memorable pamphlet of Sir Rowland Hill was issued in 1837 that any real progress was made or any attempt made worthy of mention. Postal conditions were so unsatisfactory that he made the whole subject a matter of profound inquiry and his pamphlet on "Postal Reform" stirred the nation and led to a complete reformation of the entire postal system and was the beginning of the British post office as we see it today.

The important events in English postal history given above and that which follows in chronological order are abridged from the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1891-1720, organization of cross roads and rural posts; 1753, establishment of post office in American Colonies under Benjamin Franklin; 1774, improved mail coaches and organized mail routes; 1821, first conveyance of mail by steam-packet; 1830, first mail coach by railway; 1834, postage stamps invented by James Chalmers, Dundee, Scotland; 1835, overland route to India; 1838, Postal money order system; 1840, general and uniform penny postage (per half ounce); 1855, first street letter boxes put up in London; 1856, Postal Guide issued; 1861, Postal Savings Banks instituted; 1870, transfer of telegraph to state and postal cars introduced; 1881, postal orders issued; 1883, parcel post established.

### French and German Postal History

The French Postal System was founded by Louis XI in 1464. It was largely extended by Charles IX, 1565, and generally improved under Henry IV and Louis XIII. Napoleon abolished the board system by which the French service was then conducted and recommitted the business to a postmaster general as it had been under Louis XIII. Napoleon greatly improved the service in all its details, and the measures he adopted and the reforms he introduced in 1802 remained in force for many years afterward and are probably in use now with such additions as developments suggested. The most important reforms in French Postal History were the extension of postal facilities to all the communes, effected under Charles X, 1829; adoption of postage stamp, 1849, under Louis Napoleon. Issue of postal notes to bearer, 1860; Postal Savings Banks, instituted 1880.

The development of the Prussian or present German postal system was mainly due to Dr. Stephan, who was also the chief organizer of the International Postal Union. This Prussian system, incorporated into the admirably organized post and telegraph service of the empire, began with the Great Elector, 1646. In Strasburg a messenger code existed as early as 1443. A postal service was organized at Nuremberg in 1570. The first mail steam packet was built in 1821; the first transmission of mails by railway was in 1847; telegraph service in postal affairs, 1849. A regular delivery by letter carriers attached to the state postal system existed in Berlin as early as 1712.

These principal items of postal history concerning France and Germany are condensed from the excellent articles upon the subject as found in the Encyclopedia Britannica, edition of 1891, as well as the information on English postal history, for which acknowledgment is made in its proper place relating to the Postal History of Great Britain.

### The American Colonial Period

The earliest attempt to provide postal facilities for the colonies was in 1672 when Governor Lovelace, of the New York colony, established monthly service between New York and Boston. An office was later established at Philadelphia from which weekly mail was received and sent. By the signing of letters patent in 1691 the control of the American posts was vested in Thomas Neale, commonly called the "Neale Patent." In that year Neale and the Royal Postmasters General appointed Andrew Hamilton, Postmaster General of America. All the colonies except Virginia cooperated with him in improving and extending the service. A weekly post was established between Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to Boston, Saybrook, New York, Philadelphia, Maryland and Virginia. Five riders were engaged to cover each of the five stages twice a week. In 1707 the crown purchased the good will of the American post and continued John Hamilton, the son of Andrew, in that office at an annual salary of 200 pounds. In the year 1737, Franklin became postmaster at Philadelphia and generally supervised the other offices of the colonies. In 1753 he was one of the deputy Postmasters General, but was dismissed in 1774 by Governor Hutchinson, of Massachusetts, because of his adherence to the patriotic cause.

### Under the Continental Congress

But Franklin was not to remain idle for when the Continental Congress met at its second session at Philadelphia, July 26, 1775, they resolved to have a post office system of their own and he was selected to carry on the work. A salary of \$1,000 per annum was voted him with permission to employ a secretary and a comptroller with a salary of \$340 per annum to each, and a line of posts ordered established from Falmouth, New England, to Savannah, Ga., with postages 20 per centum less than those afforded by parliament. However, Franklin's great diplomatic ability soon secured him a transfer to a wider field of usefulness and his son-in-law, Richard Bache, who had been comptroller, was named to succeed him. The ledger kept by this gentleman is still preserved among the archives of the Department. It consists of about 3 quires of foolscap, written over in a neat and legible hand. Ebenezer Hazard, who had been the Constitutional postmaster at New York, so termed to distinguish him from the British deputy at that place, was appointed to succeed him.

In 1782, an act was passed by the Colonial Congress establishing a line of posts between New Hampshire and Georgia, the salary of the deputies not to exceed 20 per cent of the revenues. The rate of postage at that time on letters weighing not over 1 penny-weight and going not more than 60 miles was equal to 5½ cents and a proportionate charge for greater weights and distances.

#### The Crown Postmasters

In a well-written article in the Washington, D. C., *Evening Star*, of July 26, 1913, upon the occasion of the celebration of the one hundred and thirty-eighth year of the American postal service, the activities or self-assumed powers of the English or crown postmasters and its effect in encouraging the independent sentiment of the time was stated as follows:

"These crown postmasters had, or at least they exercised, the right of 'spying' upon the mails intrusted to their care. This made it difficult and dangerous for the liberty-loving colonists to communicate with each other. The zealous representatives of England also professed to exercise a supervising care over the newspapers which were printed in the colonies, and made arbitrary rules and regulations against those who were too liberal or outspoken in their expressions of condemnation of things as they then were and who dared to urge the liberty and independence of the colonists. Some papers were shut out of the mails and some were forced to tone down their utterances. A pound sterling was demanded to carry 250 papers, 130 miles.

"The post office led in the unification of the colonists. Paul Revere was the confidential post rider of Massachusetts. The tea party in Boston Harbor would have been but a neighborhood affair but for the agency of the post office and the patriotic publishers who spread the news up and down the Atlantic coast.

"The postal service did more than any one other agency to unify and unite the colonists. It brought their interests and endeavors to a common meeting point. It brought the leading men and women to know and exchange ideas one with another. Printing presses were established about the same time that the postal service was begun in America. Postmasters enjoyed the privilege of sending their mail free of postage, so most postmasters became publishers. In this way the news of the doings of the various jealous colonists was disseminated and the opinions of these early postmaster-publishers were given wide circulation. It added an incentive to trade and intercourse. By making the colonists acquainted it dissipated jealousies. The growth of the post office from the humble beginning of a sturdy carrier from New York to Boston loaded with 'divers letters and small portable packages' (you see they had parcel post even in those days), solidified the colonists and made their independence possible."

### Post Offices and Post Roads Established

During the Continental Government, the receipts of all the post offices did not exceed \$35,000 and in 1789 were \$10,000 less. February 20, 1792, an act was passed establishing post offices and post roads within the United States, the first general law. The contracts made were to run eight years and the salary of the Postmaster General was increased to \$2,000, and \$1,000 for his Assistant. The original number of post offices (that is for the first year) was seventy-five and the mail routes less than 2,000 miles over which mails were carried by horse, stage, or sailing packets. In 1795, the number of postoffices had increased to 453, and the routes to over 13,000, and the net revenue to over \$42,000. This closes the period of Continental management, except ordinary details and changes which bore no relation to any especial object or purpose.

### The Period of Progress

From 1801 dates the great advance in modern methods, ideas and accomplishment. It then occupied forty days to get a letter from Portland, Me., to Savannah, Ga., and bring back an answer, and forty-four at Philadelphia for a reply to one addressed to Nashville, Tenn. Ten years later the time had been reduced to twenty-seven and thirty days. By 1810 there were over 2,400 post offices and the post routes covered over 37,000 miles. Marked improvements began soon after this period. The office of Second Assistant Postmaster General was created and the scale of postages changed. Single letters of one piece were charged from 8 to 25 cents, according to distance. Sunday delivery of mail at post offices was inaugurated about that time in the face of great objection from the religious bodies of the country, the strife being kept up for many years.

In 1813 the mails were first conveyed in steamboats from one port town to another, the Government paying 3 cents for each letter and 1 cent for newspapers. The postal laws of 1816 made a further change in postage which lasted until 1845. The new scale charged letters consisting of one piece of paper, not going over 30 miles, 6 cents; not over 80 miles, 10 cents; not over 150 miles, 12½ cents, and not over 400 miles, 18¾ cents, and for greater distances, 25 cents. On the ninth of March, 1829, Hon. William T. Barry, of Kentucky, was commissioned Postmaster General by President Jackson, and called to a seat in his Cabinet, being the first Postmaster General to receive that honor.



### Postage Stamps Introduced

Early in 1836, pony expresses as they were called, were put into operation on the principal turnpike roads of the Southern and Western States for the purpose of carrying letters of persons desiring greater expedition, press news and Government dispatches, at triple the ordinary rates, but the experiment was abandoned, not proving profitable. In July, 1838, the Department was reorganized and an Auditor appointed. The office of Third Assistant Postmaster General was also created at that time. Railroads were declared post routes by act of Congress, in July, 1838, and the mails carried upon them. Postage stamps of the five- and ten-cent denominations with the faces of Franklin and Washington, respectively, were introduced in 1847. Previously all postages were collected entirely in money, prepayment being optional. July, 1851, a new series of stamps was adopted, consisting at first of denominations of 1 and 3 cents, but afterwards of larger amounts.

### Progressive Steps Taken

Rapidly sketched for reference, the more important progressive steps that followed show that during the administration of President Tyler, while Hon. Charles A. Wickliffe, of Kentucky, was Postmaster General, many reforms were instituted, such as cheapening the postage, improving the manner of letting routes by contract, prohibiting private expresses, and restricting the franking privilege. Prior to this period, letters were not rated by weight but by enclosures. For instance, a letter containing three bank-notes for which the single letter charge would be  $18\frac{3}{4}$  cents for over 150 miles, was then charged 75 cents, the inclosure making it a quadruple letter. Under the new system the rate was measured by the weight, all weighing not over half an ounce were regarded as single letters and carried for 5 cents for distances not over 300 miles and 10 cents for greater distances. In 1850 the "foreign desk," from which ultimately grew the admirable arrangement of the Postal Union, was instituted by Hon. Horatio King, of Maine. Through the efforts of Judge Hall, of New York, Postmaster General under President Fillmore, the postage on letters was reduced to 3 cents. The registration system came in under Postmaster General Campbell, of Pennsylvania, during the administration of President Pierce. The Free Delivery Service

was inaugurated in 1863 by Hon. Montgomery Blair, of Maryland, also the money order system in 1864, in Lincoln's administration. The Railway Mail Service dates from July, 1862, when Judge Holt, of Kentucky, ordered its establishment, the first railway postoffice being from Quincy, Ill., to St. Joseph, Mo., on the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railway.

#### Historical Data

A summary of historical data covering some of the principal features of postal progress may be given in chronological order as follows: Postage stamps first issued at New York, July, 1847; stamped envelopes first issued, June, 1853; letters registered, July, 1855; newspaper wrappers, Act of Congress, February, 1861; Free City Delivery, July, 1863; Money Order System, November, 1864; International Money Orders, October, 1867; Postal Cards, May, 1873; Postage reduced to 2 cents, October, 1883; Special Delivery, October, 1885; Rural Delivery, October, 1896; Postal Savings, January, 1911; Parcel Post, January, 1913.

The maximum number of post offices in the United States, 76,945, was reached in 1901, since which time by the introduction of rural delivery the number has steadily declined, 21,011 having been discontinued. July, 1916, there were 55,934 in operation. Extent of post routes in miles in 1790 was 1,875. In 1915 the number was 1,672,169. The miles of service performed in 1915 amounted to 617,527,795. The entire compensation paid to postmasters in 1789 was \$1,657. In 1916 the estimated amount was \$31,150,000.

## CHAPTER II

### Questions of Finance

#### Postal Revenue—How Derived

The revenues of the Post Office Department are derived from sales of stamps, stamped envelopes, newspaper wrappers and postal cards, second-class postage (pound rate) paid in money, box rents, money order business, balances due from foreign postal administrations, miscellaneous receipts, fines and penalties, and from unclaimed dead letters and postal matter. Its greatest revenue is received from postage paid on mail matter. The amount so received in the last fiscal year was \$287,001,495.13, or 91.97 per cent of the total revenue received. Of this amount \$20,174,973.93 was received from mailings of second, third and fourth-class mail matter on which the postage was collected in money, the remainder, \$266,826,521.20, being the postage paid by means of stamps. Entire revenue, 1916, \$312,057,688.83.

#### Revenues and Expenditures

The audited revenues and expenditures of the Post Office Department for the year 1916, show that the ordinary postal revenue yielded \$303,232,143.36; revenue from money order business \$8,130,545.47, and from postal savings business \$695,000. Total revenue received, \$312,057,688.83. Expenditures: On account of the current year, 1916, \$297,637,128.87. On account of previous years, \$8,566,904.27. Total expenditure during the fiscal year 1916, \$306,204,033.14. Excess of revenue over expenditure, 1916, \$5,853,565.69. Amount of losses by fire, burglary, etc., \$24,419.62. Surplus in postal revenue for fiscal year 1916, \$5,829,236.07.

#### Method of Expenditure

Expenses of the postal service are paid as follows:

*By Postmasters.*—Postmasters are authorized to pay their own salaries, the salaries of clerks and carriers attached to their offices, rent, light, and fuel, and other expenses of their offices from postal receipts.

*By Warrants Drawn upon the Treasurer of the United States.*—These warrants are in payment of the contracts for transportation of mail, supplies, and other obligations that cannot be paid direct by postmasters. The accounts are prepared for payment

by journals in the Bureau of the Post Office Department having jurisdiction over the appropriations and certified to the Auditor, who reviews them and forwards the journals to the Division of Finance. Warrants are then drawn for the amounts due to contractors, countersigned by the Auditor and mailed direct from the Department to the payees.

*By Disbursing Postmasters.*—Certain payments may be authorized by the Postmaster General to be made by postmasters designated as disbursing officers. The Department authorizes and directs disbursing postmasters, one in each State, to pay the monthly salaries of rural delivery carriers. In addition thereto the Department authorizes other postmasters who are designated as disbursing officers, to pay the salaries of railway mail clerks, and in some instances the salaries of postoffice inspectors and other employes of the postal service. When the receipts of an office are not sufficient to meet the pay rolls authorized by the Department, the postmaster is instructed to make an estimate of the deficiency and forward a requisition to the Postmaster General therefor. An accountable warrant drawn on the Treasurer of the United States for the sum needed is then forwarded to the postmaster who deposits the same in a depository bank and issues his check in payment of such salaries.

*By Transfer Draft.*—If a balance appears to be due a postmaster after his term of office has expired and his accounts have been adjusted, the Auditor certifies the amount due and upon this certification a transfer draft issued by the Department and drawn on a postmaster in the State in which the former postmaster resides, is forwarded in settlement of the account.

#### How Appropriations Are Made for the Department

Appropriations for the Post Office Department are made by the Congress upon estimates submitted to the Postmaster General by the heads of the various bureaus according to the nature and needs of the service. After examination and approval by the Postmaster General, these estimates are sent to the Secretary of the Treasury where the estimates for all Departments of the Government are assembled for transmission to Congress. Hearings on the estimates submitted by the Postmaster General are then held by the House Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, the members of which go over the items in detail, the various

bureau heads being in attendance to explain more fully, if need be, the public necessity and requirements of the estimates submitted. The Postmaster General may also be called upon to explain these estimates if the Committee so desire. At the conclusion of these hearings, the result of such inquiry and the recommendations of the Post Office Committee are submitted to Congress and are considered in Committee of the Whole. When the post office bill is under consideration and upon its passage through the House of Representatives it is in charge of the Chairman of the Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, who answers all inquiries made and defends the action of his committee in submitting these estimates to Congress for its action and approval.

#### Auditor for the Post Office Department

All accounts of the Post Office Department are audited by the Sixth Auditor of the Treasury, who is the Auditor for the Department. When the Department was reorganized in 1836 this position was created for the purpose of relieving the Postmaster General of the responsibilities of this particular form of official duty. The statutes define these duties which are numerous and important, the fiscal relations, owing to the great growth of the postal service, being of such magnitude and involving such an amount of detail that the office has become one of the greatest of the auditing branches of the Treasury Department. The annual reports of the Auditor to the Postmaster General show the financial condition of the Department at the close of each fiscal year and are a part of the Postmaster General's report to Congress. A very large force of clerks is required to conduct the operations of the office and the most approved devices and methods are used to facilitate the dispatch of business. For greater convenience the office of the Auditor is lodged with the Post Office Department.

### CHAPTER III

## Department Operations—General and Detailed Descriptions and Cost of Service

### History of Rural Free Delivery

The subject of Rural Free Delivery occupies so much public attention both in the press and among the people, and the Department has shown such interest in the matter and done so much to make the service popular and attractive as a public measure, that it is worthy of some considerable space in a work devoted entirely to postal affairs. Aside from tabular work which has no proper place in descriptive accounts of departmental operations, a very good idea of what rural delivery is and aims to accomplish, may be gathered from the articles which follow this introductory reference.

The history of Rural Delivery dates from January 5, 1892, when Hon. James O'Donnell, Member of Congress from Michigan, introduced the first bill in Congress relating to the subject. This bill carried an appropriation of \$6,000 but failed of passage. March 3, 1893, Congress appropriated \$10,000 for experimental purposes but this sum together with \$20,000 appropriated July 16, 1894, for the same purpose, was not used, Postmaster General W. S. Bissell, of New York, deeming the amount insufficient. On June 9, 1896, \$10,000 together with the prior appropriation of \$30,000 was made available, and experimental rural free delivery service was established by Postmaster General Wilson, of West Virginia, on October 1, 1896, simultaneously, on three routes in that State—Charlestown, Uvilla and Halltown.

At the close of business June 30, 1916, there were 42,927 rural routes in operation, 42,766 carriers covering 1,083,070 miles and serving 5,719,062 families, representing a total population of 26,307,686, and at the cost of \$51,715,616. Aggregate daily travel by rural carriers, 1,063,305 miles. Average length of rural routes, 24.96 miles. The first complete county service was in Carroll County, Maryland. Available reports show that between the years 1905 and 1909, delivery of mail on rural routes increased 87 per cent. In 1913, 2,745,319,372 pieces of mail were delivered; in 1915, 3,193,326,480; 1916, 3,022,755,601. Cost of delivery per patron: 1915, \$2.060; 1916, \$1.966. Average annual pay of carriers was \$1,162.50, including motor vehicle service. For horse-drawn routes the average was \$1,155.48.

### Rural Delivery Defined

The doubts, uncertainties and the delicate questions involved in the early days of rural delivery when the subject was viewed with concern, cautiously tested as an experiment and its extension in various directions regarded as perhaps outside the bounds of original intent and therefore to be approached with considerable reserve, is well illustrated when petitions from Utah and other mining sections of the West for the establishment of such service to supply isolated communities devoted exclusively to mining, raised the question in the administration of Postmaster General Charles Emory Smith as to the proper definition of rural free delivery. It was held by the First Assistant Postmaster General that the term "rural" meant communities not included in cities or incorporated villages, and that it did not necessarily imply that the persons so situated should be engaged in farming pursuits.

### The Struggle for Rural Free Delivery

The aim and purpose of rural delivery was to place the rural resident on something like equal grounds with the dweller in the cities so far as mail facilities were concerned, not exactly so, for conditions were dissimilar, but to such reasonable extent as circumstances would permit. For years there had been a growing discontent among farmers and the people in the smaller towns and villages because of the postal advantages afforded to the cities, and the more populous communities. They felt themselves deprived of opportunities and benefits which others enjoyed and could not understand why the accident of location should make such a difference. Postal service was intended for all the people, not a part, not merely for those who had chosen to live in cities but for those outside as well. This desire to share at least in the benefits so freely accorded to others became at length so outspoken and insistent that recognition could no longer be denied and the matter was finally introduced into Congress and an attempt made to secure legislation upon the subject.

The magnified difficulties of such a proposition as rural delivery contemplated had long deterred action, and when the attempt was finally made, the question was viewed with such caution and approached with such hesitation and the apprehension of an unknown and indeterminate expense so bound up with possible failure of real benefit in proportion to cost, that postal authorities

hesitated to take the initial step. Even when a sum of money was appropriated the task seemed too great for successful accomplishment, and it was only when further delay was vigorously opposed that the step was taken. Congress voted \$40,000 to make the experiment and with that to begin with active measures were taken and the rest is postal history.

### The Advantages of Rural Delivery

The question has frequently been asked to what extent and in what way has rural delivery service benefited the country sections of the United States. Many magazine articles have been written to show the general advantages it affords in rendering rural conditions more tolerable and enduring the inconveniences to which such life is subject. In one particular at least, it has been of immense advantage and that alone has secured it great public favor. It has given the farmer his daily paper. This great educator of our modern civilization, an almost indispensable necessity of our times, was practically denied the rural resident before the advent of this service, but now the avenues of communication are so far-reaching and the service so well conducted, that publishers of daily papers have not only been able to greatly extend their circulation in every direction, but actually to bring the morning newspaper to the farmer's door at an hour which places him on an equal footing with his city neighbor in all the advantages which early news can give, but which is of special advantage to the farmer who has something to sell and is thus directed to the best market for his purpose.

The combined opportunity which both publisher and subscriber now enjoy in country sections reached by rural delivery and the use made of it is forcibly illustrated in a recent statement published in a South Dakota paper. A rural carrier stated that when he started service some years ago there were but three farmers on his two routes who took daily papers. There are now something like 200 dailies taken by patrons on these routes, some farmers subscribing for two or three.

What rural delivery has done in other directions may be summed up as follows: It has broadened the field of industrial opportunity, touched as if with magic power the possibilities of human endeavor, and transformed conditions to a degree almost marvelous. It has brought special delivery almost to the door; secured good roads



and maintains them by official interest and concern; has attracted the attention of the various States to this question and obtained results; it has made farm lands more valuable and contributed to increased production; it has abridged time by rapid communication; brightened all environment, and made ordinary dull routine interesting and attractive; it has lessened toil by the instructive suggestions which Government experiment and inquiry affords, and has made the home a center of influence and crowns domestic life with all that makes for peace and contentment.

### Rural Delivery as Viewed by President McKinley

The favorable opinion entertained of the advantages of the rural free delivery service when it was yet in the experimental stage and doubts were expressed as to its practical benefit, cost considered, is well set forth by President McKinley in his annual message to Congress, December 3, 1900.

"This service ameliorates the isolation of farm life, conduces to good roads and quickens and extends the dissemination of general information. Experience thus far has tended to allay the apprehension that it would be so expensive as to forbid its general adoption or make it a serious burden. Its actual application has shown that it increases postal receipts, and can be accompanied by reductions in other branches of the service, so that augmented revenues and the accomplished savings together materially reduce the net cost."

### The First County Rural Service

The first full county service was inaugurated in Carroll County, Maryland, and at a time when weather conditions made it something of an undertaking. December 20, 1899, was the date selected and winter with its storms and snow had put the roads in the worst possible condition. Sixty-three post offices and thirty-five services by star route contractors, were discontinued in one day and rural free delivery service substituted. Westminster, then a third-class office, was made the distributing center but postal stations were established in villages where post offices had formerly been located.

Service started with four two-horse postal wagons and with a postal clerk in each to issue money orders, register letters and cancel stamps on the letter mail collected. These wagons supplied mail to twenty rural carriers at designated points and brought all the

territory within easy and convenient reach. This initial service first covered 387 square miles of the 453 in the county, but soon afterward embraced it all.

The inauguration of so great a change in postal service created antagonism and a strong delegation came to Washington to enter protest. But the manifest advantages which soon began to appear, silenced all opposition, and the great majority of the protesting citizens withdrew their opposition and bore convincing testimony to the efficiency and value of the service. The cost of the service in the first three months was \$4,543, saving by service superseded, \$2,805. Increase of postal receipts was \$1,501.75 leaving net cost of the whole county service for three months at only \$236.

This successful county experiment attracted wide attention and full county service was thereafter rapidly established in many directions.

#### Country-wide Extension, Rural Delivery

The extension of rural delivery has increased from year to year and the cost of the service has grown in corresponding proportion. The great next step would be country-wide extension, which has been frequently mentioned on account of the vast possibilities bound up in such a measure. This would, however, involve a very considerable expense. It is estimated that to extend this service to all rural patrons wherever located would cost something like \$100,000,000 more. While such complete service is the logical conclusion of all rural delivery effort and may be expected to engage public attention in the near future, as it is the only means left by which the thousands of people now deprived of such benefits can be reached and accommodated, such a tremendous advance must be seriously considered before any definite steps can be taken, but rural delivery will never reach the point of greatest usefulness until this country-wide extension is an accomplished fact and people everywhere are permitted to equally enjoy the benefit which it confers.

#### How Rural Delivery Enhances the Value of Farm Land

Many arguments have been advanced by the friends of rural delivery to show the almost immeasurable value of this service to the farming communities of the nation, but there is one case which has come under the notice of the publisher which presents an argument of such striking force that it is worthy of special mention.

Mr. Marion F. Holderman, of Washington, D. C., states that in 1885 he bought 135 acres of farming land three miles east of Rantoul, Ill., in Champaign County, for \$44 per acre, and that in 1901 rural delivery was established enabling the delivery of the Chicago daily papers at his gate in the morning, thus giving him all the advantages of the Chicago market and the opportunity of the shipment of grain, stock, and farm products the same day that these published market reports appeared. This fact so greatly enhanced the value of the land through these succeeding years that he was able to sell this property for \$225 per acre on March 1, 1917, thus netting him a profit of \$24,435. No improvements were made on the farm except necessary repairs and painting of the buildings.

He states that if there had not been rural delivery he would have had to go to the post office for his mail at least twice a week which at the lowest estimate for the time of the person, vehicle, and the horses would have cost him over \$225 per annum, and as there are 105 families on the route besides himself, the saving to the patrons of the route by this service is over \$23,850 annually, besides the value of the land increase, and the many other advantages which have followed.

Taking his estimate of saving to each family along a route and allowing for six families for each mile, three on each side of the road, and there being 1,037,259 miles of rural delivery roads in the United States, it can be seen what an aggregate wonderful saving this has made, not counting the property, personal and educational value of such a service to the people.

It will be seen that by this showing that the saving to the patrons of 1 mile of rural delivery service (\$1,350) will more than pay what it costs the Government for a 24-mile route at a rate of \$1,200 per annum.

### The Per Capita Cost in Rural Delivery

The per capita cost in the Rural Delivery Service has been a matter of considerable interest to those who are following the progress and extension of this branch of the public service. The great advance which has been made in this service and the still greater extent to which it is proposed to extend it, embracing ultimately all patrons wherever located, naturally raises the question of cost as a whole and the cost per patron.

Charles Emory Smith, Postmaster General in 1900, who was one of the staunch friends of rural delivery in its early days, said the gross cost could be estimated by three methods, cost per square mile, cost per capita, and cost per county. Adhering to the subject in hand it may be stated that he found the cost per capita at that time to be 92.7 serving a population of about 2,000,000 people on something less than 3,000 routes. There is no reliable data covering the period to 1910 upon this subject, but taking an estimate based upon close calculation, it is found that notwithstanding the tremendous growth of this service during that time reaching in 1910 over 41,000 routes and accommodating over 20,000,000 patrons, the cost per capita had arisen to only 1.797, and now with nearly 43,000 routes and serving over 26,000,000 people as patrons, the cost per capita is but 1.966. No answer as to cost considering the known value of such service could be illustrated more forcibly than by the figures here presented. If the undeniable benefits of rural service to the people can be given with ever-increasing efficiency at a cost no greater than that, it can be reasonably assumed that the people who live upon the farms of the United States and endure the hardships of such life with its many attendant inconveniences are certainly entitled to their share of public benefit, especially when as shown, the cost is so small compared to the immeasurable advantages afforded.

The city delivery service of the nation with its 34,000 carriers costs now over \$43,000,000. No computation of cost per capita in this service has ever been made and relative comparison cannot be given but such figures as are available show that in 1911 the per capita cost of serving the people in the cities of the country was \$1.40 and that in 1916 this cost had increased to \$1.75. When the comparatively comfortable conditions under which city delivery is conducted is considered, and the proportionate difference in appropriation taken into account, it will appear that the excess of cost in rural delivery is no greater than might naturally be expected from the peculiar nature of the service, the territory to be covered, and the almost insurmountable conditions with which it has to contend. Indeed, it is a matter of surprise that the cost of service per capita under the circumstances is so small.

To keep down the public expense to so low a figure while extending this service to millions of people heretofore denied this privi-

lege, should be a matter of congratulation and encourage the hope, as well as assure the ultimate end towards which all rural delivery aims and activities are directed, viz., country-wide extension.

#### Some Necessary Conditions of Rural Delivery

England, France and Germany antedate us in the establishment of rural delivery, but the service there is bureaucratic, originating always with the post office officials and dominated by red tape requirements. Ours is democratic and cooperative. It is established upon petitions sent through Representatives in Congress, irrespective of party affiliation. However, any application received from a postmaster, or individual, showing reasonable warrant for the establishment of a rural route in any community will be given careful consideration by the Department. It is absolutely free, the only conditions the Government makes in establishing and maintaining service is that those who desire to avail themselves of its beneficent provisions shall do their part towards rendering it of public advantage, viz., by mending their roads, building bridges over unbridged creeks and streams, see that the county commissioners give prompt attention to such needs and provide themselves with suitable receiving boxes, conveniently placed along the roadside that the carrier can readily deposit and collect mail without alighting from his conveyance. Patrons can do much towards aiding the Government in this matter and they doubtless do their bit in a willing and accommodating spirit.

#### Annual Cost Per Patron, and Pieces Handled in Rural Delivery Service

A study of the annual cost per patron in the rural delivery service for the year 1916, shows that in the States of California and Utah, and in the District of Columbia, it was less than \$1 each. In the States of Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington and West Virginia, it was more than \$1 and less than \$2. In Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Vermont, Wisconsin and Wyoming, it was more

than \$2 and less than \$3, and in North and South Dakota it was over \$3 and less than \$4. Annual cost of service for patron decreased from 2,066 in 1915 to 1,966 in 1916.

The annual cost per piece of mail handled on rural routes was lowest in the States of Arizona, California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Utah, and the District of Columbia, and highest in Arkansas, Florida, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, and Tennessee. Annual cost per price handled was .0144 in 1915 and .0150 in 1916.

The States which had the largest number of patrons served on rural routes (over a million in each) were Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Texas. The States which had less than 100,000 patrons served were Arizona, Delaware, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Utah, Wyoming and the District of Columbia.

#### Population and Extension of Rural Service

Relative to the provision in the act making appropriations for the rural service for the fiscal year 1917, "that rural mail delivery shall be extended so as to serve as nearly as practicable the entire rural population of the United States," it should be stated that rural delivery service covered, at the end of the fiscal year 1916, 1,037,259 miles of roads, while star-route service was operated upon 139,684 miles.

It is estimated that there are 2,199,646 miles of public roads in the United States, so that there remain 1,022,753 miles of roads on which no mail service is in operation.

At the end of the fiscal year 1916 an estimated population of 26,307,686 was served by rural routes, 520,000 by star routes, and approximately 10,000,000 by fourth-class post offices. The total rural population in the United States is placed at 43,991,722. It will be seen, therefore, that while 83 per cent of the rural population is receiving convenient mail service, 47 per cent of the rural road mileage is uncovered.

#### Speeding Up the Rural Service by Motor Vehicle

This is a time of intense activity. Action is demanded everywhere and "get there" is the cry of the day. Brevity and speed are in close fellowship in the business world and competition spurs on towards the greatest possible endeavor in any direction where

advantage lies. Expedients no longer serve. Only that which is best and in the highest degree efficient, can hope to survive. The introduction of the motor car in transforming conditions and producing wonderful changes is characteristic of this pushing age. Time is money. The motor has demonstrated its value, and dominates the field of all far-reaching enterprise. Business men recognize its tremendous possibilities and advantageous help in saving time and abridging distance. It spells efficiency in commercial life and men strain a point to bring themselves up alongside their pushing and wideawake neighbors in availing themselves of this great modern aid to the completest equipment. The farmer realizing what it can accomplish in his peculiar domain, has hastened to supply himself with what will contribute to his profit, and he finds in this great adjunct to energetic industrial life the means of increasing his business and enlarging his vision of opportunity and desire.

Motor vehicle service is of course an innovation upon the 24-mile horse-drawn route, and as any innovation upon old-established custom may expect to meet objection in the administration of public affairs, especially when such an innovation contemplates a readjustment of routes and a possible reduction of carriers, objection was raised in some quarters, but the desire to secure all the benefit which the parcel post could give by the opportunity afforded by zone extension, was a determining factor in the case, and the Postmaster General, availing himself of the power vested in him by act of Congress, ordered its establishment, due regard being had to the limitations and conditions under which it could be operated. Experience has justified the wisdom of such action. Motor vehicles were accordingly introduced into the rural service in 1915 to meet this demand for greater expedition in service and the transportation of increased amounts of parcel post and mail matter on extended routes and principally from the larger cities. These routes must, however, be 50 miles in length and the compensation is fixed at not more than \$1,800 per annum, the carriers to furnish and maintain their own motor vehicles. On June 30, 1916, 500 of such routes were in operation with a total length of 26,878 miles, averaging 53.756 miles per route, with an annual cost of \$877,824, or an average of \$1,755.65 per route. These motor routes superseded horse-drawn vehicle service formerly costing \$1,093,106 a year, or an annual saving of \$515,282. Motor

routes are of especial benefit in sections where railroad facilities are lacking. The greater distance covered by motor routes makes it possible for a much larger number of persons in given localities to communicate with one another on the same day, eliminating the necessity for taking the mail to postoffices for redispach and in some instances transshipment over one or more railroads. Better facilities are also afforded for the transportation of products of the farm. Indianapolis, Ind., is a conspicuous example of the efficiency of this service in reducing postage; a 20-pound package mailed on a rural route from one office in Marion County addressed to a patron of a rural route on another, which would have cost 24 cents, can now be carried for 15 cents, and a 50-pound package from one point to another, the cost of which would have been 54 cents will now cost but 30 cents.

#### Village Delivery

In furtherance of the desire of the Government to do everything in its power to oblige and accommodate the people of the country and enlarge every privilege which could advance their interests or provide for their comfort, the question of the extension of village delivery, for which there has been considerable demand, but which has heretofore received little encouragement, was taken up with a view of securing such action from Congress as would allow further extensions to be made, the original appropriation being too limited for the purpose.

Between the very great facilities afforded the dwellers in the cities and the almost equally great accommodation shown to those in the rural sections, village delivery was but imperfectly considered and the benefits and advantages which a more direct attention to these needs could have secured, was allowed to remain in abeyance, or at least not given the attention it deserved.

But the claim of the residents of small towns to equal privileges with more favored localities was at length recognized and village delivery which was established and put into operation in 1912, was extended until 280 of such towns now have this accommodation, employing 400 carriers. The entrance salary paid village delivery carriers is at the rate of \$600 per annum, and increased to \$690 per annum after twelve months of satisfactory service. Only communities where the annual post office receipts amount to \$5,000 are entitled to this service.



Carriers appointed at third class offices are not subject to civil service rules as such offices are not classified. When the receipts amount to \$8,000 per annum, the office is advanced to second class and the village delivery carriers are given a civil service status.

#### City Delivery

In 1864 the number of city delivery offices was 66, number of carriers 685, cost of service, 1864, \$317,063.20. In 1916 the number of offices was 1,864, number of carriers 34,114, and the cost of service \$43,136,818. Average annual salaries of carriers for the past four years has increased from \$1,080.22, to \$1,115.46. Carriers enter the service at a salary of \$800 per annum and are promoted annually on their service record through the various grades until they reach the salary of \$1,100 at first class offices, and \$1,000 at offices of the second class, after which promotion depends upon their exceptional efficiency.

#### Star Routes

June 30, 1916, the number of star routes was 11,187, length in miles, 147,167, average cost per mile of length of routes \$54.16, per mile of travel \$0.1026. In the renewal of contracts on certain routes in the western States under new form of advertisement there was a reduction in the cost of operation of \$130,000.

Star routes are so-called because originally, a "star" appeared on the advertisements for contract bidding to distinguish them from other contracts and because of the words "with due celerity, certainty and security" which appeared in connection with such contract service. The purpose of star route service is to serve post offices off the line of railroad travel and incidentally such families as may live between those post offices who erect boxes or hang out satchels to receive their mail, also to collect mail where proper provision has been made for the purpose.

No bid submitted under an advertisement for star route service will be considered unless the bidder shall agree in his bid that in the event of the contract being awarded to him he will reside on or contiguous to the route and give his personal supervision to the performance of the service.

#### Postal Savings

The postal savings system was inaugurated January 3, 1911. In June, 1916, the number of depositors was 602,937 and the

balance to the credit of depositors was \$36,019,885.00. The denominations of postal notes or certificates are \$5.00, \$10.00, \$20.00, \$50.00 and \$100.00, and they may be purchased at any postal depository. The interest allowed by the Government is 2 per cent. These deposits may be exchanged in amounts of \$20.00 and multiples thereof, for  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent U. S. Postal Savings, registered or coupon bonds. Postal certificates are made at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

### Money Order System

Dr. Charles F. Macdonald, who had been greatly interested and had taken an active part in the establishment of the money order system, was upon its inauguration in May, 1864, appointed as superintendent. He is often called the "father of the money order system" and doubtless with some considerable justice. He labored untiringly to make it a success, and upon his death in 1902 it was found that he had bequeathed \$2,000 to the United States to be used by the Postmaster General in the improvement of that service, and Congress by act of October 22, 1913, accepted the gift, and the commission appointed by the Postmaster General in furtherance of the act recommended that a vignette of Dr. Macdonald be placed on the money order draft forms. This recommendation was approved by the Postmaster General and carried into effect. Orders issued: 1916, 121,636,818. Amount, \$719,364,950.46. Orders paid and repaid: number, 122,379,113. Amount, \$720,584,719.58. Net money order revenue for 1916, \$6,821,499.75.

### Stamp Books

The need for some convenient way of handling postage stamps when more were purchased than immediately required and which need was long felt and operated as a bar against the purchase of stamps in any considerable quantity for occasional use, led the Hon. Edwin C. Madden, Third Assistant Postmaster General, to consider some method of remedying this lack, and on March 26, 1900, after considerable experiment with paper of various kinds to suit the purpose, devised the stamp book now in use of which millions of copies are annually sold. In 1916, the Department issued 28,005,930 of these books and the demand for them is constantly increasing. These books are made in six different kinds—books containing 24 and 96 stamps of the 1-cent denomina-

tion; 12, 24 and 48, of the 2-cent denomination, and a book containing both 1-cent and 2-cent stamps, viz., 24 1-cent, and 24 2-cent.

In this connection it may be but just to divide the credit of the origin of the stamp book with Captain Bain of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, who, it is said, had the project in mind for some time previous to its inauguration as a public accommodation. Mr. Madden is usually given the credit but, as stated, the credit may perhaps be fairly divided, as it is understood that both these gentlemen collaborated in the perfection of the project.

#### Postal Cards

The postal cards now so generally used at once sprang into public favor when adopted in this country in 1873. Their use has not only been a means of carrying intelligence in easy and convenient form, but has contributed to commercial enterprise in many forms, and many directions as the growing demand for them in the business world amply indicates. The number issued to postmasters in 1916 was 1,047,894,800 and the value of these cards was \$10,784,307.00.

#### Division of Stamps

Postage stamps and other stamped paper	
on hand in post offices, July 1, 1915..	\$104,035,823.48
Stamped paper charged to postmasters..	287,352,176.84
Sales by postmasters, July 1, 1915, to	
June 30, 1916.....	277,728,025.20
Stamped paper on hand in post offices,	
June 30, 1916.....	112,332,714.66

The reduction in stamp sales which followed the outbreak of the war in Europe and the gradual recovery is shown in the increases, viz., for the quarter ending September 30, 1915, the percentage of increase was 3.01; for December 31, 1915, it was 9.04; for March 31, 1916, it was 9.87; for June 30, 1916, it was 11.25.

Interesting information concerning the manufacture of stamps, etc., is given in the article relating to the Bureau of Engraving and Printing on page 46.

#### Division of Classification

This division is charged with the consideration of all questions relating to the classification of matter admitted to the mails, intended or deposited for mailing, including the determination of the admissibility of publications to the second class of mail matter,

the limit of weight and size of mail, penalty envelopes and the franking privilege. This office is in the Bureau of the Third Assistant Postmaster General to whom all questions upon this and kindred subjects should be addressed.

#### **Purchasing Agent**

Under the direction and control of the Postmaster General, this officer has the supervision and purchase of all supplies for the Department, whether under contract or not, for the Post Office Department proper or for any branch of the postal service. The Postal Laws and Regulations provide that a Bureau officer controlling an appropriation, may authorize postmasters and other postal officials to purchase supplies chargeable to that appropriation subject to the approval of the purchasing agent in each instance.

#### **The Dead Letter Office**

All undeliverable mail matter comes within two classes, unmailable and unclaimed. The first comprises such as is not sufficiently prepaid or so incorrectly, insufficiently or illegibly addressed that the destination could not be discovered. All letters of this class containing matter of value is classified and recorded and a considerable amount of money can thus be returned to the owner. The larger part of such unmailable matter contains articles of merchandise, photographs, etc. The undeliverable letters are those that though properly prepaid and correctly addressed are unclaimed, not taken out of the office, though effort had been made by advertisement to find the owner.

Letters and parcels received for 1916 amounted to 10,889,890. Of this number 3,677,194 pieces were delivered, 101,485 filed, 7,019,436 destroyed and 41,775 under treatment. Checks, drafts, money orders and other valuable papers of the face value of \$2,303,119.56 were found in undelivered letters, practically all of which was restored to the owners. The net revenue from the sale of undeliverable articles of merchandise and currency found loose in the mails, etc., aggregated \$53,665.69. Advertised letters returned from the Dead Letter Office now require the payment of 1 cent, the revenue of this for the past six months amounted to \$11,000, making net revenue \$64,665.69, or within \$10,000 of the whole amount required to conduct the operations of the office.

Formerly all dead matter came to Washington for examination

and disposition. Now there are twelve large cities in the country geographically arranged, to which dead matter is sent in addition to what is received in Washington. This has made it possible to largely reduce the force in the Washington office. The establishment of the Dead Letter Office dates back to 1825.

### Mail Locks

There are four kinds of locks used by the Department, in protecting the mails, the brass padlocks seen on letter and package boxes, the iron lock used on mail pouches, the inside letter box lock, and the registered lock used to protect the more valuable mail. The locks and keys are made by the Government in the equipment shops at Washington. Of the iron lock there are something like a million in use. These locks are made at a cost of  $8\frac{1}{2}$  cents each and weigh but  $2\frac{4}{5}$  ounces, the lightest and best lock ever used for the purpose. Locks previously in use cost a great deal more to make and keep in repair and were much heavier. The study of economy in various forms during the past four years has made it possible to introduce many reforms in the manufacture of locks of which the above is a significant example. Steel is now largely used in all lock equipment on account of the high cost of brass. All equipment used in mail transportation is made by the Government.

Mail locks and keys were formerly made by contract, but during the administration of Postmaster General Dickinson it was decided to do this work under Government supervision. Public policy, no less than economy dictated this course. While the manufacture of Government locks was surrounded with all possible safeguard and precaution there could be no absolute assurance that the mechanism would be kept secret, would be safe from imitation, so the Government, both for security to the mails and for economic reasons, decided to have the work done under its own direction.

### Mail Pouches and Sacks

In the general scheme of mail bags used in the postal service the term "pouch" is used to apply to all mail bags designed for locking by means of mail locks, and the term "sack" is used to apply to all mail bags used in the postal service which are designed for closing but not locking.

Under the term "pouch" may be mentioned those bags used

for inclosing through registered mail, saddle bags, designed for transportation of mail on horseback; inner registered bags, used for holding registered matter and inclosed in another receptacle; and the ordinary pouches for first class mail matter such as letters, etc.; also the mail catcher pouch, the use of which is restricted to the exchange of mails with moving trains.

Under the term "sacks," which are designed for closing, as a rule, but not locking, comes the ordinary sack for newspapers and parcel post matter, and bearing a cord fastener which bears a label case and also serves for closure purposes. The standard bag is made of No. 8 canvas, of best quality, and withstands usage for several years. The sacks used for foreign mails, ordinary and registered, are not provided with a closure device but are tied with a string and secured with a lead seal, but it is expected in the near future these classes of bags will be equipped with a locking contrivance.

During the last ten years the weight of pouches used for ordinary service has been rapidly diminishing. The average weight of pouches in 1907, largest size, was about 9 pounds 5 ounces each, while those now being introduced into the service weigh  $2\frac{1}{2}$  pounds each. This reduction in weight being due largely to the elimination of leather parts. Many old-style pouches are still in use, viz., made of a heavy canvas body, leather bottom and a light weight top; costing about \$2.16 each; the "1908" pouch made of a heavy canvas bottom with leather band and a lighter weight canvas top and body, costing about \$1.44 each. These pouches are now being rapidly replaced with the all-canvas pouch costing less than 70 cents each. Catcher pouch used in the exchange of mails on moving trains costs 80 cents each. Wherever possible, the Department has eliminated expensive leather and other parts in the production of its equipment.

There are approximately 600,000 pouches and 4,000,000 sacks available to the service at present. The all-canvas pouch which the Department now furnishes costs between 69 and 70 cents, while the largest size domestic standard sack cost a little less than 73 cents, smaller sizes in proportion. Pouches and sacks are purchased by contract but kept in repair by the Government. New pouches of new types are also manufactured by the Government, nearly 80,000 being made in the Mail Bag Repair Shop during the past year.

The principal movement of mails is from the east to the west, from the great commercial centers to the less densely populated districts. This ebb and flow is natural in ordinary times, but is greatly increased both in volume and quantity when the immensely stimulated holiday trade changes conditions in all directions and calls for the exercise of administrative ability in meeting extraordinary demands and supplying suddenly developed needs. These conditions are met by a system of distribution devised to meet just such needs, whereby congestion is relieved at one point and pressing demands accommodated at another, the various mail bag depositories under capable management rendering such necessary aid. The whole supply of bags has been handled as much as ten times in one year through these depositories without which the peculiar conditions of the service could not be met. Mountain carriers in the northwest require special pouches especially in the sections where snow shoes are needed. The carriers in Alaska with their dog-teams have also special makes of pouches and thus all conditions are met where peculiar needs require it.

#### Post Office Supplies

In June, 1872, Congress authorized the establishment of a blank agency for the purpose of supplying the smaller post offices with blanks and stationery. The appropriation was \$132,500. In 1883 the scope of this enactment was enlarged and the Department undertook the tremendous task of supplying all the post offices of the country with stationery and all the office equipment and appliances needed in the conduct of public business. The amount of a recent appropriation for the purpose was about two and a half million dollars. From this blank agency has grown the Division of Supplies, which furnishes all supplies needed except mail bags, locks and keys, which come under the equipment branch, of which this division is a part. Supplies are sent to postmasters upon requisitions made out upon blank forms furnished for the purpose. These requisitions are carefully revised by clerks and allowances made conformably to practice and customs. Money order and postal note requisitions are also handled in this division. Supplies are required in enormous quantities for public use. In twine alone the required amount for 1916 was 2,000,000 pounds, or 680,000 miles of it. Ink 15,000 gallons. Facing slips more than a billion; pencils, pens, blanks, envelopes

and paper in staggering amounts. The utmost economy is practiced in sending out these immense supplies that waste may be prevented and the money appropriated used to the best advantage. The capable management of the Superintendent and those in charge of the Division of Equipment and Supplies, has produced gratifying results in all directions and rendered service which has been recognized and appreciated.

### Special Delivery

Special delivery was authorized by Act of March 3, 1885, during the administration of Postmaster General Vilas. Established October 1, 1885. At first restricted to free delivery offices in towns of 4,000 or more inhabitants. August 4, 1886, it was extended to all free delivery offices. Special delivery service is made to all persons within the carrier limits of city delivery and to patrons of rural service who reside more than 1 mile from post offices, but within half a mile of rural routes. Deliveries are made at all first and second class post offices on Sundays and at other offices if open on Sunday, and at all offices on holidays. Auditor's report shows that for the quarter ending September, 1916, the amount expended for this service was \$633,713.21. The number of pieces delivered was nearly 8,000,000, or a yearly average of something like 32,000,000.

### Foreign Mail Service

The foreign mail service of the United States dates back to 1868, when James H. Blackfan was chief clerk of the Department. This service was then in charge of the chief clerk and when the office of Superintendent of Foreign Mails was created he was placed in charge of it. These mails are carried under the Act of 1891. All mails not carried by the mileage basis under this act are carried by non-contract vessels on the weight basis. The total cost of this service in 1916 was \$2,223,341. The rate of compensation allowed under the general statute for the sea conveyance of United States mails by steamers of American register, not operated under the ocean mail Act of 1891, is not exceeding the full postage of the mails conveyed. The two principal offices from which foreign mail is dispatched are New York and San Francisco. Clerks are assigned to this service as need requires. Under the regulations of the Universal Postal Convention, mail

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matter other than parcel post, may be dispatched whether fully prepaid or not, but as double the amount of postage is collectable when not fully prepaid, postmasters in this country have been instructed whenever practicable to notify senders of short-paid letters that such double expense might be avoided. On registered articles and parcel post packages, full prepayment is compulsory. Rate of postage is 5 cents for the first ounce or fraction of an ounce, and 3 cents for each additional ounce or fraction thereof. Letter postage for England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales and British possessions goes at 2 cents an ounce. International parcel post rate is 12 cents per pound or fraction of a pound.

### Topography Branch

The impetus given to this branch of the service, the making of maps, by the rapid growth of rural delivery, the reorganization of which made the completion of county maps an almost immediate necessity, has considerably stimulated activity in this direction and been productive of great benefit generally. Recompilations of State maps have been made, old drawings brought up to date and diagram maps replaced by those of the regular edition. The making of maps has developed into quite an industry in recent years owing to the greatly increased need for such matter. Few people realize how necessary such aid is in determining questions of administrative concern, especially in such vast areas of public enterprise as the growth and extension of the rural delivery and star route service involves.

These public maps are very largely used for post routes and altogether this branch occupies quite an important place in Department operations. Of the post-route class 43,258 were printed during the year of 1916, 1,545 were sold to the public, together with 5,983 county and 1,963 local center maps (blueprints) the balance having been distributed to the postal service, to other Departments and to Members of Congress. In the blue-printing plant 7,964 county maps, 13,330 local center maps, and 10,347 miscellaneous plans, forms, etc., were made.

Of the 3,010 counties in the United States there are 2,630 in which rural delivery service is in operation. Accurate maps, showing rural service in 984 of these counties, have been completed, while preliminary maps for 755 others, giving similar information, have been drawn. Base maps and other data are in

hand which will be used in the compilation of maps of 432 additional counties. Active steps are being taken to procure information from every possible source for use in compiling maps of the 459 remaining counties.

These maps of every county in the United States in which rural service has been established, are made on a scale of 1 inch to the mile. They show all public roads, rural routes, post offices, houses, school-houses, churches and streams. Negative prints are sold at 35 cents each by application to the Third Assistant Postmaster General. Lists are furnished on request showing maps completed.

#### Division of Post Office Service

On the first of July, 1916, a new division was created in the office of the First Assistant Postmaster General to be known as the Division of Post Office Service. This new division absorbs the duties formerly performed by the City Delivery and the Division of Salaries and Allowances. All persons employed directly in post offices as well as the city carriers will now come under the control of this division. It will also include every function relating to the handling and the moving of the mails in the cities and towns of the country. More efficiency and better results generally are confidently expected to follow this change which is in line with the general policy of placing all closely related duties under the same jurisdiction and control.

## CHAPTER IV

### Special Articles on Postal Subjects

#### The American Postal System

The genius of the American Postal System is found in the harmonious cooperation of its several parts, in direction and in operation; wise policy and purpose as seen in the formulation of plans, with willing assistance in operation to render such plans effective. The Postmaster General directs the policy, the bureau heads execute what is determined upon and the benefit or failure is seen in practical administration. All alike share in achievement, the mind that conceives, the heads that direct, and the force upon whose faithful and intelligent effort the outcome depends.

A form of Government democratic in all its parts and tendencies requires fidelity and patriotic purpose in performance from every one to whom any trust is committed, and in every successful accomplishment of any given plan or purpose, the measure of success is always in proportion to the interest taken or the industry with which such plan or purpose is pursued. Loyalty alike to administrative endeavor or the public welfare is imperatively required and unless this is faithfully and ungrudgingly given no plan can succeed, even the best devised must surely fail. There is such a thing as patriotic devotion to public duty and no man is fit to hold an office of trust no matter how small it may be who does not consider this as an obligation to be met and honestly discharged. If any one thing has contributed to make our postal establishment prosperous and great it is the conscious acceptance of the full meaning of such an obligation. This has distinguished Americans in all public employment, emphasizing the stirring words of Lord Nelson, England's great naval commander, whose injunction to patriotic response upon a memorable occasion deserves to be remembered in civil life as well, for loyalty and patriotism are as much in accord there, as much demanded in ordinary civil functions as in the more heroic, but not less honorable and useful pursuit common to our national life.

#### Considerate Treatment of Newspaper Mail

When General Gresham was Postmaster General in President Arthur's administration, the Washington correspondent of the *Louisville Courier-Journal* complained to him about the non-

delivery of newspapers mailed by private individuals. "What do you think is the reason?" asked General Gresham. "I attribute the failure," said the correspondent, "to the carelessness of post office officials. A newspaper in their mind is a very small thing and it is handled accordingly. If the address is the least unintelligible no effort is made to decipher it and it is tossed on the floor and if the wrapper happens to be torn it shares the same fate, and I believe that newspapers are often torn open and read without any conscientious scruples whatever."

"I am glad you told me about the alleged carelessness that exists in post offices in the country," said General Gresham. "I shall give the matter prompt attention. If I cannot work out a reform in that respect, I would remove a postmaster for breaking the wrapper of a newspaper or making away with it as quick as I would if he had torn open a letter. One is as sacred as the other."

#### Bureau of Engraving and Printing Stamp Manufacture

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing in which all the postage stamps used by the Government are manufactured is a wonderful institution every way. Every known appliance and all that the mechanical skill and ingenuity of the Director, Hon. Joseph E. Ralph, and his very capable expert and designer, Mr. B. R. Stickney, could devise, have been brought into requisition for the purposes the Bureau is intended to serve.

The various operations required in printing postage stamps alone, of which such enormous quantities are annually required, would seem a great undertaking, but when to this is added the printing of all the paper money, bonds and securities used by the Government, the magnitude of the task may be understood. Between four and five thousand people find employment within the Bureau, the greatest establishment of its kind in the world. Thousands of visitors annually witness the wonders therein displayed and come away impressed with the marvels they have seen in the adaption of means to a definite purpose. The care and comfort of the employes is a matter of deep concern to the Director and every possible method of providing for both, by approved means of sanitation and ventilation, is availed of. The air is washed and strained to cleanse it of all impurities and full hospital provision made for those who may need medical care and attention. Nothing seems to have been forgotten or overlooked in

this most wonderful of all government establishments and the result is that under favorable working conditions the utmost that may be expected is fully realized.

The ordinary postage stamps are in denominations of from 1 cent to \$1 and of nineteen kinds. The output is 40,000,000 daily, or something like thirteen billions per annum, with a face value in 1915 of \$221,875,000. They are printed in sheets of 400 each, which are divided and subdivided until the sheet contains 100 stamps in which amount they are sent to the post offices for public use. The various processes used in manufacture, the printing, gumming and perforating, are separately performed on the sheets of stamps; those intended for slot machines are printed and perfected on a rotary press which performs all the operations at once. This press, the invention of Mr. Stickney, after seven years of labor, will save 65 per cent of the cost of printing stamps per annum or \$280,000, and will completely revolutionize stamp printing from intaglio plates. It combines twenty-three operations in one. It prints, gums and perforates the stamps, cuts them into sections of 100 stamps each, or will finish the stamps in coils of 500 and 1,000 stamps per coil. It turns out the finished product ready for shipment to the postmasters of the country. As an object lesson to further show the tremendous proportions of this postage stamp industry, it may be stated that the daily output would cover approximately eight acres of land if laid flat or make a chain of stamps 703 miles long if laid end to end. The sheets of 100 stamps each sent to post offices in 1915, piled up one upon another, would make a shaft over 6 miles high, and placed end to end would make a strip over 16,000 miles long and as there are ten rows of stamps on each sheet, a strip of single stamps would be more than 160,000 miles long, enough to girdle the earth six times with something over.

The paper required to print these stamps for the year 1915 amounted to 1,200,000 pounds, and to make this paper and to obtain this amount, 3,500 spruce trees were ground to a pulp. Converted into lumber this would have built fifty houses complete. The amount of ink required was 670,000 pounds.

When the post office inspectors, unannounced, visited the Bureau at the close of the fiscal year of 1915 to check up the accounts, they were found correct to the last one-cent stamp, a high compliment to the excellent accounting system in practice at that institution.

Orders for stamps are received daily from the Office of the Third Assistant Postmaster General and shipped by the Bureau.

#### Post Office Inspectors

The Division of Post Office Inspectors is in many ways one of the most interesting in the postal service. The duties are varied and of especial importance, as the Post Office Inspector when on duty for the Department is the official representative of the Postmaster General and clothed with all due official authority. The purpose of such officials is to have ready at hand reliable men for confidential work. Unusual capacity is required, tact, judgment, patience and courage. The duties of an inspector are not measured by the ordinary hours of employment, but depend altogether upon the nature of the work he is called upon to perform, day and night in successive order, being synonymous terms when especial service is required. Complaints are generally the basis of inquiry and operation, but the scope of duties takes a wide range, involving special work of any kind and in any direction. Irregularities in the service form the principal basis of complaints, but violations of postal laws, frauds and depredations upon the mails furnish a proportionate share.

The inspectors are assigned to duty in geographical divisions of the country under an inspector-in-charge, with the Chief Inspector at Washington in general control. As a rule inspectors do duty in their divisions, but under the orders of the Postmaster General they may be sent anywhere. They are expected to be familiar with the Postal Laws and Regulations and conduct their inquiries in accordance therewith. The division is directly under the Postmaster General and in the classified civil service, and the selections made for this important service represent men of intelligence and integrity. Volumes could be written of the strategy employed and methods pursued in tracing criminal operations. The more agreeable duties, however, require an equal amount of skill though attended with less danger and difficulty. The force of inspectors has been largely increased in recent years because of postal growth and development in all directions.

#### The Railway Mail Service

The Railway Mail Service of the United States, the most splendid of all the branches of the postal service, owes its origin to Hon. S. R. Hobbie of New York, First Assistant Postmaster

General in the administration of President Jackson. Upon his return from Europe in 1847, he made a report to the Department giving his impression of the traveling post office in England. The Department was then struggling with many difficulties in the distribution and bagging of the mails and one plan after another was tried with but indifferent success. Finally Judge Holt, Postmaster General in 1862, determined to try the English system and the first railway post office was introduced in the postal service of the country. The overland mails were then carried by stage coaches from the west side of the Missouri River to California and the immense accumulation of mail matter at Saint Joseph, Mo., destined for the Pacific Coast and the intermediate States, induced the Postmaster General to establish the first railway post office on the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad (Quincy, Ill., to St. Joseph, Mo), the pioneer road in Railway Mail Service history. The growth of the Railway Mail Service has been marvelous and its achievements unequalled in modern progressive development. Three thousand five hundred railroad mail routes, aggregating 502,937,359 miles of service and employing nearly 19,000 postal clerks and supervisors with salaries amounting to over \$26,000,000 attest the strength and greatness of this magnificent arm of the postal service. Of the 14,369,582,586 pieces of mail matter distributed and re-distributed during the past year, 14,367,325,426 pieces, or 99.984 per cent, were handled correctly—a record which should be a matter of pride to every man who wears the badge of the R. M. S. The fifteen divisions in which the whole service is divided each complete in itself, but responsive to central control and direction in Washington, has brought the system to such a state of perfection that but little remains for further experiment.

#### The Parcel Post and the Opposition to Its Establishment

The splendid showing made in the recent reports of the Postmaster General touching the growth and development of the Parcel Post in this administration must be of interest to the people of the country for whose benefit this measure has been so successfully conducted. Its admitted usefulness brings forcibly to mind the struggle through which this measure passed before the force of public opinion and the evident advantage it foreshadowed, secured its ultimate adoption.

While in the American Republic history is rapidly made and startling changes are not of infrequent or uncommon occurrence, it is, however, true that subjects which provoke discussion because cherished interests are endangered or settled opinions of public policy liable to be overthrown, require time in which to adjust themselves to changing conditions.

The student of political economy will be interested to note how these changes of time and condition affect the opinion and views of men identified with public affairs. What seems wisdom and good judgment in one generation is opposed and set aside in another, both acting for the general welfare and inspired by patriotic purpose.

The proper scope and purpose of government, in its relation to the people whom it serves, is always a matter of deep concern, not only as to the views held by those appointed to administer public affairs, but also in the opinions and ideas of the people themselves. While a great principle may remain in many minds the same, unchanged and reluctant to change, conditions may operate to produce views entirely dissimilar and completely at variance with those of another and previous period.

Two greatly divergent and distinctive opinions have divided the thinkers and the statesmen of our country as to the proper functions of such a government as this. This difference arising from the educational environment of many leaders of public opinion, easily became a matter of accepted political or party belief between those who held to the limitations of delegated authority and those who inclined to wider power and greater privilege. Both have had earnest and strenuous advocates, but the tendencies of the times conclusively point to the growing acceptance of the latter as more suited to a great and growing nation whose needs may not be fettered by tradition or obstinate blindness to the march of progress, but must recognize the paramount interests of the people whose welfare should always be the chief concern.

The Parcel Post is now a recognized benefit to the country. All classes and conditions profit by its mutual advantage. Its gigantic strides to popular favor cannot be measured or adequately described. The burdensome exactions of the high tariffs, which corporate enterprise so long interposed, have been lifted and closer relation established between buyer and seller, by which both are the gainer. As no compromise was possible where



monopoly was concerned, it remained for the Government to set aside the question of limited powers and give the people of the country the benefit to which they were entitled, but which monopoly denied, viz., the opportunity to profit by the use of the facilities which were at hand and which have proven so thoroughly effective. Two names stand out prominently in this connection, the statesman whose thorough knowledge of the subject and whose earnest and intelligent efforts shaped and directed this great public measure, and the public official whose hearty cooperation assured its success. Hon. David J. Lewis, of Maryland, and Hon. Albert S. Burleson, the Postmaster General, deserve the thanks of the country for their work in this beneficial enterprise and the meed of praise will not be withheld.

The old-time belief in the necessity of curbing the ambitious designs of those who were striving to open the way to an enlargement of government privilege is strikingly seen in the attitude of Postmaster General Jewell in his annual report to Congress in 1874. In referring to the activity then already seen to widen the scope of the Post Office Department and engage in enterprises held by many at that time and the Postmaster General in particular, as foreign to the sphere of duties and intended purposes and powers of the Department, Mr. Jewell said:

"I would suggest that the time has come when a resolute effort should be made to determine how far the Post Office Department can properly go in its efforts to accommodate the public, without trespassing unwarrantably upon the sphere of private enterprise. There must be a limit to governmental interference and happily it better suits the genius of the American people to help themselves than to depend on the State. To communicate intelligence and disseminate information are the primary functions of this Department. Any divergence from the legitimate sphere of its operations tends to disturb the just rule that, in the ordinary business of life, the recipient of a benefit is the proper party to pay for it, since there is no escape from the universal law that every service must in some way be paid for by some one. Moreover, in a country of vast extent like ours, where most of the operations of the Department are carried on remote from the controlling center, the disposition to engage in lateral enterprises, more or less foreign to the theory of the system, may lead to embarrassments whence extrication would be difficult."

Although the advocates of the privileged rights of private enterprise have ever resisted the entrance of government into the field

of national endeavor, the triumphant progress of the Parcel Post under Departmental direction has silenced all captious objection, for its admitted adaptation to the needs of the country and its growing popularity among the people, attests the fact that no limitations can be wisely set in public affairs which bars the progress of an intended benefit.

An attempt was later made in 1901 to check the growth of public sentiment favorable to the establishment of the Parcel Post, for which a bill has been introduced into Congress, by a concerted movement, by whom originated is not known, which aimed to arouse the merchants in rural sections in opposition thereto, a widespread propaganda, the object of which was to flood President McKinley with a stereotyped circular signed by these rural merchants all over the country, in order that such measure might not meet with his approval because of the wreck and ruin it would be sure to create. To what extent this movement was carried or what attention it received from President McKinley is not known, but the fears of Postmaster General Jewell or the alarm of the rural merchants were not borne out in the light of subsequent events, as the successful progress of the Parcel Post has abundantly demonstrated.

This popular measure was, however, not to be secured for the public good without strenuous effort, even in these later days when its early adoption was so clearly foreseen. It still had to encounter opposition, the lingering echo of previous struggle. Its friends had to meet and combat resistance, within and without the halls of legislation and it was only by determined purpose and a concert of effort that criticism was finally silenced and the measure written into the statutes of the nation. Congress passed the act, August 24, 1912, and the struggle of nearly half a century was at an end with the popular will triumphant.

First recommended in 1892. Law passed by Congress August 2, 1912. Became operative January 1, 1913. It is in operation on 45,000 rural routes and a billion parcels are carried annually. Parcels may be sent C. O. D., may be insured, 3 cents for parcels valued up to \$5 or less and a low graduated scale up to \$100. Indemnity is paid for partial loss or damage. Rate is charged by weight in pounds and by zones. Books are now admitted and all classes of proper merchandise accepted. Weight is limited to 50 pounds for first and second zones (150 miles)

and to 20 pounds beyond. Postmasters will give all necessary information.

### Interesting Facts about the Postmasters General

Excluding the border States, the South, properly speaking, has had but two men in the office of Postmaster General since the days of Benjamin Franklin—Joseph Habersham, of Georgia, and Albert Sidney Burleson, of Texas. The more populous States of the east, with their political power and material advantages, have had the greatest number of such appointments, 23 of the 48 men who have held that office having come from that section. The border States have had 15 and the west only 8. It was not until 1866 that the west was at all recognized in the appointment of such cabinet officer, when Alexander W. Randall, of Wisconsin, was chosen by President Johnson. Subsequently that State furnished three more Postmasters General, viz., Howe, Vilas and Payne. In 1829 the Postmaster General became a member of the cabinet by the action of President Jackson, his first appointee to that position, Hon. William T. Barry, of Kentucky, receiving that honor.

In considering the States of the Union which have been most fortunate in appointments to this office, it is found that Pennsylvania and New York have each had 6 to their credit; Connecticut, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Wisconsin, 4 each; Massachusetts, Maryland, and Ohio, 3 each, and the remainder scattered among the 18 States from which all the Postmasters General have been selected.

The term of service was, it seems, much longer in the olden days than at present. From 1775 to 1850—75 years—there were only 17 men in that position, Gideon Granger, of Connecticut, having served 13 years and 8 months, and Return J. Meigs, of Ohio, 9 years and 3 months. From 1850 to 1913—63 years—there have been 31 men in that office. Whether the shifting currents of political life and expediency, or other causes, have operated to make changes in this office, it appears that many occurred in the administrations of some of our chief executives. Roosevelt, for instance, had four Postmasters General; Grant, Arthur, and Cleveland (in the latter's two terms) also had 4 each; Washington and Buchanan, 3; Jackson, Fillmore, Lincoln, Hayes, and McKinley, 2 each. The remainder of the Presidents evidently retained the men they had originally appointed.

### Withdrawal of Letters from the Mail

It may not be generally known that a letter once mailed can be withdrawn. Such is, however, the case. Letters may be withdrawn from the mails at the office of mailing by satisfactory identification, a written address in the same handwriting, if address was written, or such other evidence as will satisfy the postmaster of the applicant's right to withdrawal. If letter has already been dispatched the postmaster may telegraph to the point of destination for withholding such letter from delivery, or to a railway postal clerk in whose custody the letter is known to be, carefully describing the same and requesting its return. A sum must be deposited with the postmaster sufficient to defray all expenses incurred.

### Handling of the Mail

Official mail comes to the Department addressed to the several Bureaus. It is then opened, assorted to the various divisions and redistributed to the clerks according to the subjects named or special duties assigned to each. The divisions are supervised by the official in charge, under whose direction the work is done and by whom the responsibility is assumed. He advises with and suggests methods of operation, and in important matters involving special correspondence, assumes direct charge himself. Letters written by clerks are submitted to the chief for examination before being initialed for mailing, or for the signature of the Bureau heads where such signature is required. Letters are answered according to date of receipt all reasonable promptness being enjoined. Filing is done according to the nature and duties of the various bureaus and the character of correspondence and papers in use. Approved systems are followed and metal filing cases generally employed. In the Bureau of the Fourth Assistant where monthly reports are received in connection with the regular mail, during the month of January, 1917, the amount so received aggregated 72,000 pieces, and 46,000 pieces of mail were dispatched. Ordinary hand work could not dispose of such amounts with the force assigned, therefore mechanical devices for opening and sealing mail are employed for the purpose. Messengers gather the outgoing mail by regular rounds and it is dispatched as soon as brought to the mailing room. A work of considerable magnitude in this Bureau is now being conducted, viz., the purging of the accumulated rural and star route files and correspondence which

had so grown in bulk as to make both search and handling difficult. It was a much needed reform and will be found of especial value in filing operations.

### Cost Accounting

By means of an accurate cost-keeping system devised for the equipment shops, but which can be adapted to any form of clerical expense, great improvements have been made and savings effected. All mail equipment is now supplied at a greatly reduced cost and in improved form. Supplies for post offices are judiciously and economically handled under the system now in operation, all discoverable waste checked and the service greatly benefited. The direct, the indirect and the overhead charges can now be clearly ascertained in any form of manufacturing enterprise and the cost in any direction definitely known. It was a long felt need in economical administration and its introduction in the Post Office Department has been of decided advantage.

### Cleansing Mail Bags

The life of a mail bag is about six years and after being dragged about on railroad platforms and other places they accumulate an amount of dust and dirt which renders them unfit for handling when returned to the bag shop for repair. The old practice was to shake them out by hand, but in the hurry and haste of business this was but imperfectly done and there was constant complaint among the operators and clamor for a better system. After many experiments and various tests a method was at length devised which cleans them thoroughly and does away with the discomfort under which the work was done. The method finally adopted consists of large tumbling barrels or cages made of wood with slats and fashioned in the shape of a star, holding several hundred bags each. Driven rapidly by electric power the bags are thoroughly shaken, the escaping dust confined in a tightly constructed room and carried off by blowers into an immense canvas bag resembling a dirigible balloon when inflated. At stated intervals the end of this bag is opened and the dirt and dust removed. Four thousand bags a day are now successfully treated by this process.

### The Farm-to-Table Movement

As the farm-to-table movement is now attracting a great deal of public attention and is directly connected with the postal service

by its afforded means of communication, some observations upon the subject may be worthy of mention.

There are four fundamental facts connected with the subject, viz., the points of production, places of consumption, methods of operation and means of communication. Production is upon the farm, consumption in the cities and towns, methods, to be determined by experience, and the mode and means of conveyance, a government function.

Regarding the first of these divisions, certain facts are apparent. The balance of trade, eight to one is against the farmer at the point of production; he receives very much more than he sends. Why this disproportion? It is caused either by lack of interest in the subject, or because of lack of practical experience in the successful management of such business enterprise. The remedy in either case is in his hands. If interest is wanting he should cultivate it; if he has made experiments and they have failed of proper results, he should not become discouraged but try again. High prices in the cities lead the residents there to seek relief by direct dealings with the producer. The consumer will reach him if he puts himself in touch with the man who is seeking, and the desire to sell his goods and do business, should lead the producer to inquire how best it can be done. The postmaster can help him by advice and counsel and it should be a pleasurable duty for the postmaster to advise and confer with, and put the producer (who is his patron), in the way of profitable business intercourse with the man in the city who needs him and is only too anxious to find who he is, where he lives, and what he has to sell.

While the country postmaster at the point of production has a duty to perform in advising with the producer (for the postmaster is to all intents and purposes the "middleman" in this connection) the city postmaster has also a duty to perform in assisting the resident there to find the most convenient places of production and how such places can be easily reached and what can be procured there that the city resident wants and needs. Many postmasters are now paying especial attention to this matter on account of the urgent necessity which the high prices, and diminished quantities of provision that come to the cities, render so necessary, but conditions require that many more should be engaged in that direction to afford all the benefit this great measure of the Government was intended to give.

The methods, the best methods to obtain the end desired, both at the point of production, where the supply is found, and at the point of consumption to which this supply is to be transported, must be discovered by the actual results which the various methods that have been tried have produced, or were found to be most advantageous and most successful. Many plans have been suggested and tried out, but it must remain for experience to demonstrate and determine which of these is best and most likely to secure advantageous benefits.

The remaining question is the part the Government is called upon to perform to reap the most possible results and make the farm-to-table movement popular and profitable. The Government is more ready to act than either producer or consumer seem to be; to extend every privilege and afford every accommodation which postal enterprise or the public purse can provide, that this, in some sense paternal relation of government to people in benevolent provision for their welfare, may secure all that its most sanguine projectors ever hoped to accomplish. It has the support of Congress, and the Postmaster General has omitted no word or act which could in any manner contribute to its success and stands ready to do the utmost that his great office and his great opportunity afford, to make this measure a benefit and a boon to all the people.

The readjustment of prices will come, and the remedy appear, when the elimination of so much handling, packing, repacking and distributing with its consequent loss and its increased cost, decreases the cost which the consumer has to meet for all this added labor, and for which he pays the price, and from which burden the parcel post by its direct and better system of exchange aims to free and relieve him.

#### Postal Service in Alaska

Alaska is so far off that its interests do not commonly concern the people to any great extent. The Government, however, takes a more paternal view of its only territorial possession in North America, and has paid particular attention to its progress and development, especially in postal affairs and the means of communication among the people. Alaska has now 170 post offices of which 45 have money order facilities. It has 21 star routes with an aggregate length of 4,544 miles and an annual travel of

249,331.10 miles. Annual rate of expenditure, \$260,518.50. Average rate of cost per mile traveled, \$1.04. Average number of trips per week, 52.

#### Standardization in Post Office Methods

During this administration a very important change was made in the management and conduct of the larger post offices of the country. It was found that the delivery of parcel post matter by vehicle was costing from 1 to 6 cents each. Investigation showed that this varying cost was largely due to lack of uniformity in methods and equipment and that the need of standardization extended to every branch of post office service. Postal experts were accordingly sent to all sections of the country to study existing methods and recommend necessary changes. As a result, unnecessary independent divisions in post offices were eliminated and two divisions established, one in charge of records, accounts and financial services, the other to have charge of the mail handling operations. The personnel of the offices also received attention, that as far as possible, clerks could be assigned to the duties for which they were best fitted. Subsequent investigation confirmed the advantage of such standardization, and the large post offices which handle 75 per cent of the nation's mail, have now been brought under such improved control that the benefit which such intelligent methods, properly carried out, should naturally develop, has been abundantly shown.

#### Postal Savings Circulars in Foreign Tongues

The Government has for years been anxious to reach citizens of foreign birth residing in the United States for the purpose of informing them relative to our Postal Savings System. Circulars have now been issued in the mother tongue to Bohemian, Bulgarian, Chinese, Croatian, Danish, Norwegian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Magyar, Italian, Japanese, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Ruthenian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, and Yiddish people here which have been widely distributed and are expected to be of considerable service. The foreign born population in this country, according to the census of 1910, numbers over 13,000,000 and it is believed that the business of the Postal Savings System would be greatly increased if the attention of these people could be



properly directed to its advantages, and these circulars in their own language are intended for that purpose.

#### Postal Enterprise of a Patriotic Maryland Editor

It seems from old records on the subject as mentioned in the *Washington Evening Star*, that some of the editors of the colonial period of our history had quite a good deal to say and took a very active part in shaping political events, particularly in postal affairs. One Maryland editor, Goddard by name, when his papers were refused in the mails on account of his outspoken views, set about establishing what he called "A Constitutional American Post Office." He issued a circular, July 2, 1774, announcing his plan, and went about the colonies soliciting support. Committees were appointed and subscriptions of money secured, postmasters designated, riders secured and service established, which was instantly patronized. Crown post riders found the roads unsafe and resigned. Goddard was printer of the *Maryland Journal*, printed at Baltimore, and by the early part of 1775 he had thirty offices and nine post riders, covering the territory from Massachusetts to Virginia, including Georgetown-on-the-Potomac.

It was a private service, operated in opposition to the still existing British service. Goddard had declared his desire to have the Continental Congress assume charge and administer this service for all the people.

The Continental Congress took up the matter and appointed a committee composed of Mr. Franklin, Mr. Lynch, Mr. Lee, Mr. Willing, Mr. Adams, and Mr. P. Livingston, who brought in their report July 25, 1775.

The report was taken up and considered the next day, July 26, 1775, when it was resolved, that a Postmaster General be appointed for the United Colonies. The record of the Continental Congress on that day (postal independence day), then closes with the unanimous election of Benjamin Franklin to be Postmaster General.

#### Damage in Handling Parcel Post Mail

A study of 4,219 reports received at the headquarters of the various Railway Mail Service Divisions during a thirty-day investigation, held recently to discover the amount of damage in handling parcel post mail and the causes of such damage, it was found that in 52.81 per cent of the cases damage was caused by improper

preparation of the parcels by senders. The result of this investigation may be summarized as follows:

Cases of damage caused by improper preparation of sender.....	2,207
Cases of damage caused by improper handling by postmaster.....	107
Cases of damage caused by improper handling by Railway Mail Service employes.....	43
Cases of damage caused by improper handling by railroad employes.....	54
Cases of damage from miscellaneous causes...	188
Cases of damage from unknown causes.....	1,620
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>4,219</b>

Cases of damage to—

Eggs.....	355	8.41
Butter .....	99	2.35
Hats.....	119	2.82
Paint .....	20	.47
Powders.....	59	1.40
Preserves.....	129	3.06
Liquids .....	925	21.92
Foodstuffs.....	575	13.63
Merchandise.....	1,002	23.75
China and glass.....	368	8.72
Liquids .....	925	21.92
Fruit .....	194	4.60
Poultry .....	51	1.21
Flowers .....	53	1.26
Other articles.....	270	6.40
	<b>4,219</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Damage cases insured.....	137	3.25
Damage cases on star routes.....	304	7.21

An Opinion by Daniel Webster on Mail Extension

In this period of unprecedented postal growth and activity when history is rapidly made and great achievements are born in a day, it is interesting to recall that in 1835, during the discussion of a measure in the United States Senate to establish a post route from Independence, Mo., to the mouth of the Colorado River, the learned Daniel Webster closed his speech in opposition with the following language:

"What do we want with this vast worthless area; this region of savages and wild beasts, of deserts, shifting sands, and whirlwinds of dust; of cactus and prairie dogs? To what use can we hope to put these great deserts or those endless mountain ranges, imposing and covered to their very base with eternal snow? What use have we for such country? Mr. President, I will never vote 1 cent from the Public Treasury to place the Pacific Coast 1 inch nearer to Boston than it now is."

"I can safely venture," said Hon. D. C. Roper, late First Assistant Postmaster General in his speech at the Denver, Colo., Convention of the National Association of Postmasters, in July, 1913, from which this extract is made, "that were Mr. Webster to return to earth and accompany me on this western trip he would confess in chagrin that in no expression made during his long career as a public speaker was he wider of the mark."

#### A Blind Woman on the Pay Roll

It is wonderful how the blind, those who have been denied by nature or accident of the most priceless of all human faculties, can adapt themselves to conditions whereby the means of support may be obtained. All communities and great centers of population have doubtless such cases, especially where opportunities are afforded by private munificence or public appropriation, but there are perhaps few cases where, in Government service, it is possible for a blind person to find an opportunity to earn a living. The Mail Bag Repair Shop at Washington furnishes such a case and it is worthy of notice.

Twenty-six years ago a blind girl, Miss Hattie Maddox, called to see Postmaster General Wanamaker and asked for a place in the bag shop. She said, "You give seeing people a two months' trial at the work, will you give me that much time to prove that I can do it?" She then went to Colonel Whitfield, Second Assistant Postmaster General, who had charge of such work, and showed him some crocheting she had done and the opportunity she sought was given her. She is there today busy with a pile of mail bags, stringing them with new cords, finding weak spots and repairing them with needle and thread and does the work as well as any of those around her. An attendant from her home brings her to her daily task and calls for her, and she is one of the most contented and happy women on Uncle Sam's pay roll.

**Mr. Wanamaker's Four Great Postal Reforms**

Marshall Cushing, private secretary to Postmaster General Wanamaker, says in his book "The Story of Our Post Office," published some years ago, that Mr. Wanamaker had in mind and frequently discussed with public men, four great postal propositions, one of which this administration is now vigorously pushing forward, while the other three are still in abeyance. These propositions were the postal telegraph, the postal telephone, rural free delivery and house-to-house collections of mail. He regarded them as simple and easy business propositions.

The first proposed that the thousands of letter carriers of the Department should help the telegraph companies collect and deliver messages, and that a few clerks in a central bureau at Washington could manage the stamp department and do the book-keeping for this part of the business of the companies. Telegrams were to be written on stamped paper, sold by the Department, or upon any sort of paper provided with stamps sold by the Department, and be deposited as in the case of letters whether on the streets or attached for collection and delivery purposes at house doors. These postal telegrams were to be collected by carriers on their regular tours of collection and telegraphed to the destinations and taken out and delivered in the first delivery. Answer to be sent off exactly in the same way.

Telegraphic business was thus to be cheapened to the public because of the lessened cost to the companies by this Government aid, commonly estimated at about one third of their whole operating expenses. The gain to the Government would be not only the 2 cents for postage rates proposed for telegrams under this scheme but also the impetus given by general correspondence. The gain to the companies would be the additional patronage which lower rates and regular collection and delivery would give, also the saving of this expense and the office use, clerk hire, etc., and other expenses incidental thereto. This scheme was in no wise to interfere with the use of the quicker form of telegraphing for those who preferred it. It was simply intended to bring together in concerted action the two great machines for conveying intelligence, the telegraph plant of the companies and the free delivery operating forces of the Department. This, in brief, was his idea, but much more extensively elaborated in further supporting

arguments in its favor and in meeting objections where doubts of its practicability might be supposed to exist.

This proposition has been widely mentioned, has had many advocates, and it is interesting to note in this connection that Postmaster General Burleson entertains a somewhat similar idea, and has in three annual reports to Congress urged the matter, however, with this difference. Wanamaker's plan did not contemplate taking over the telegraph companies, simply entering into a mutual business arrangement with them, while Postmaster General Burleson goes a step farther by the incorporation of the telephone and telegraph into the postal establishment. The opposition to the postal telegraph was as strong then as now, its constitutionality being questioned by those who oppose it. Mr. Wanamaker held that the powers granted to Congress by the Constitution were not merely confined to the facilities known at the time, but were to keep pace with the progress of the country, and Mr. Burleson says, operation of these facilities inherently as well as constitutionally, belongs to the postal service. Both are thus in accord, differing only in method. The question is one of interest and its future development will be watched with considerable concern by all who wish to see further progress in this direction.

As the second of Mr. Wanamaker's propositions, the postal telephone, with its tremendous opportunities and possibilities, especially in connection with rural delivery and parcel post advantages, the magnitude and success of which even the enthusiastic and optimistic Pennsylvanian did not then foresee, is bound up in General Burleson's plan, and the third, the rural free delivery, is making such strides towards country-wide extension that it is only a matter of time when it may be brought near, the fourth of Mr. Wanamaker's propositions remains only to be mentioned.

This is the use of letter boxes for the collection as well as the delivery of mail from and to everybody's door in every city, town, village and farming community of the country. This means such an immense convenience to everybody that he does not argue the case, but simply points out its admitted advantages as a sufficient reason for its early adoption. A disk at the door-box when mail was to be collected would summon the carrier on his daily rounds, even if no mail was to be delivered; trips to the letter box on the corner would then be no longer necessary, and the ease and certainty with which collection would be made, would in Mr.

Wanamaker's opinion, give an impulse to letter writing and increase the public revenue to a very considerable extent. It would mean two great conveniences to the family, the safe delivery of letters at their door and the equally safe collection of mail therefrom. Of course to obtain this service, letter boxes would have to be provided by the householders, but Mr. Wanamaker believed that this complete accommodation would induce people to go to that trifling expense in order to gain such an evident advantage. It was tried in St. Louis in his time, and worked exceedingly well.

Postmaster General Wanamaker was an official with a far-seeing vision and actively alive to all postal possibilities, and the present Postmaster General is fully abreast of him in every form of public enterprise which makes for the utmost in postal accomplishment (See page 83, for Postmaster General Burleson's views regarding Postal Telegraphs and Telephones.

#### The Rural Carrier as a Weather Man

It is said that the most common topic among mankind everywhere is the weather. It follows nearly every greeting and salutation, introduces conversation, is always a subject of interest and affords opportunities of discussion upon which people can agree and disagree without exciting the least disturbance whatever.

It has so much to do with the temper, the disposition the pleasures and the material affairs of life that its compelling interest is admitted and the winds and clouds are ever objects of our daily attention. The Government recognizes this fact and has brought scientific knowledge to bear upon the subject for the benefit of the man who tills the soil, for the mariner upon the sea and they who dwell in the cities, and for whom wind and weather has also its peculiar interest and concern.

Weather maps are common in the crowded cities and commercial centers, but are not as convenient of access in the country districts, and aside from the reports in the morning papers, the farmer has no particular way of acquainting himself with the provision the Government has made in this respect.

It has been suggested that an easy and simple way of interesting and informing the rural residents of the daily weather forecasts would be for the carriers on rural routes who can obtain this information to make it known by means of little flags attached to their vehicles, for example, a white flag when

the weather will be clear, a red flag when rain is indicated, a yellow flag for snow and a blue flag when a cold wave is coming. This would be a daily guide, a matter of but little trouble to the carrier, and give his daily visits an additional interest to all the patrons whom he serves.

#### New Box Numbering System for Rural Routes

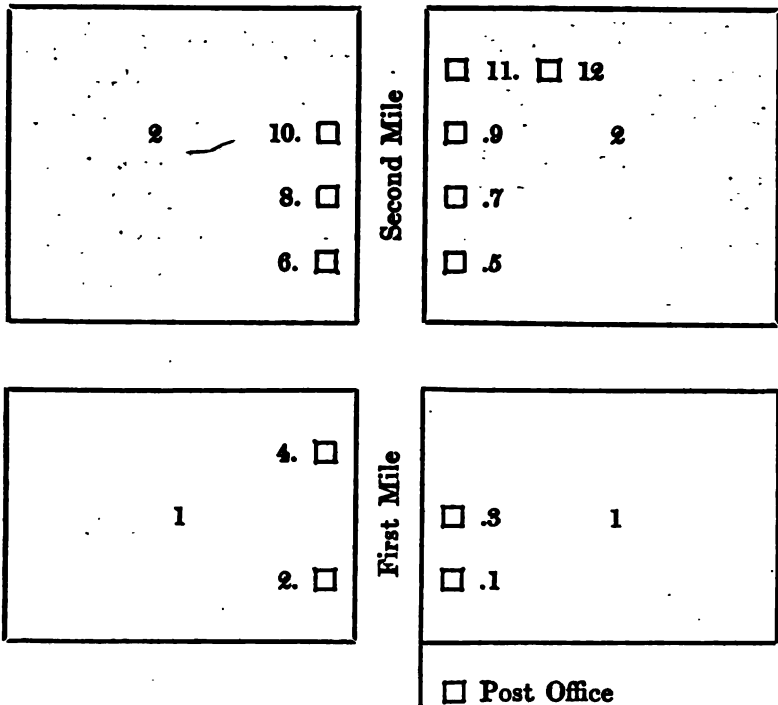
In the cities of the country the streets are named and the houses are numbered by the authorities. The Department uses these numbers and street names in its mail deliveries. A letter to be properly addressed to a person or a firm needs only the number of the house or building and the name of the street. This method is very simple and the mail is speedily and successfully handled.

In the country districts there are four systems in use by the Department, the railroads, and the express companies. The first system is where patrons erect boxes at their places of residence for the collection and delivery of mail. The letter or parcel is simply addressed to the post office, to the patron and the rural route is given. The second is where a letter or parcel is addressed to the patron at a post office, with the number of the route, the box number, the side of the road, and the miles from the office being embodied in the box number. The third is where a letter or parcel is addressed to a patron at a post office giving the route number and the number of the patron's box. The fourth system is where mail is addressed to the patron at an office giving the section and township where the patron lives. This latter system is used by the railroads relative to freight and express matter and definitely locates a person in any part of the United States. The addition of the rural route number and box makes the most complete designation possible.

There has been an ingenious plan suggested (if it can be practically employed), a newer and more complete method of numbering the boxes along rural delivery routes indicating and locating the patrons thereon which will identify the patron with his place of residence, simplify assorting, and afford in many ways advantages not offered or included in the old method.

## THE AMERICAN POSTAL SERVICE

## The Present Method



## The Suggested New Method

The diagram on the following page, which is intended to illustrate the suggested new plan, shows that in any given three numbers, such as 111, the first figure at the left would be the route number, the second figure the number of the box, the third the distance from the supplying office.

*Explanation:* The first figure as indicated denotes the rural route number, the second figure denotes the box and its location on the mile, the third or more figures denotes the miles from the supplying post office. Each mile is divided into four quarters for box designation, those on the right have the odd figures 1, 3, 5, 7, and those on the left even figures 2, 4, 6, and 8. If there is more than one box in a quarter, the other boxes are given the first box number in that quarter with the addition of a small letter *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, etc., after the mile figure or figures. The patron if he lived at the



first quarter of a mile would be addressed—John Williams, Rayville, Ill., Rural Delivery 111. This would show that John Williams lives on rural route number one, at the first quarter mile on the delivery part of the route, and that it is the first box on the first mile. If he lived on the second mile at the third quarter he would be addressed Rural Delivery 152, and his box would be so numbered. If he lived on the second mile at the second quarter, and on the left-hand side of the road, his box number would be 142. Where automobile routes are established a capital letter can be used instead of the first figure. If it is desired, the section number can be used instead of the miles figure or figures, and would then show where the patron lived in the township.

182 . <hr/> Section 162 . <hr/> 5 142 . <hr/> 122 .	Second Mile	. 172 <hr/> . 152 Section <hr/> . 132a 4 . 132 <hr/> . 112
181 . <hr/> Section 161 . <hr/> 8 141 . <hr/> 121 .	First Mile	. 171 <hr/> . 151 Section <hr/> . 131 9 <hr/> . 111

☐ Post Office Starting point.

It is understood that the Department has under consideration the question of locating the boxes on the right-hand side of the road for the convenience of the carrier. The above system can be used whether all the boxes are located on the right side of the road or not. The question of entirely abandoning the prac-

tice of numbering boxes is also being considered and if adopted, this suggested method of additional identification would of course be useless. It is simply mentioned here as an idea to aid in readily assorting mail in the office and as a more complete method of identification than under the present system. If the Department decides that the name of the owner on the box is sufficient, this suggested new plan has no further value and can be regarded as one of the many novel ideas in connection with the rural service which come up from time to time.

It may, however, be said that a box once located and numbered always retains its identity and no matter how many persons live at, or move to or from that locality, the box number retains its identity the same as a house retains its identity in a city.

#### Wireless Telephones in the Rural Service

From that memorable day in June, 1875, when Alexander Graham Bell discovered a faint sound emanating from the curious little machine over which three years of patient labor had been spent, until today, when the world is debtor to this great man for one of the marvels of the age, the telephone has been a constant wonder and especially so at this time, when its adaptability for the common uses of life has made it of value wherever civilization extends. Mr. Bell was a professor at Boston University and his honors came to him at an early age, for he was but twenty-nine when the patent that was to make him famous was granted by the Government.

He exhibited his invention at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition with but indifferent success; no attention was paid him until Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, a visitor at the fair, who knew the young inventor, placed the receiver to his ear while Professor Bell, in an adjoining room, spoke into it and, listening to it a moment, looked up with the exclamation, "My God, it talks!" Recognition by the judges was then hurriedly given and future success assured.

The fortieth anniversary of the award of this patent was fittingly celebrated at the annual dinner of the National Geographic Society in Willards Hotel, Washington, D. C., March 7, 1916. The account of what occurred there, the splendid tributes paid to Professor Bell by the distinguished men present, appears in the March number of the *National Geographic Magazine*, 1916, and presents a

story of achievement of which every American can be justly proud, but is not a matter of pride to American genius alone, but shared alike wherever men do homage to intellectual worth and greatness.

But what of the future? Can the telephone be brought to still other uses than already known? Can it be made adaptable for field use, for rural purposes in the country districts of the United States? *The Electrical Experimenter*, for April, 1917, discusses a practical possibility in this direction, not for civil pursuits but for military needs. It mentions a wireless telephone set, mounted on a motorcycle for army purposes by means of radiophonic communication in connection with a military aeroplane. This is of course intended for military purposes only, but shows the great possibilities involved and advantages that may follow fuller investigation of wireless methods. All questions of wireless development for military needs, however, may now be safely left in the hands of those directly concerned. Perhaps the greatest interest centers at present in its possibilities in the field of the rural delivery service where its successful introduction would work a most tremendous change. If, for instance, it could be used by a rural carrier, what a field of opportunity it would open in connection with such service.

Is there a possibility of such accomplishments? It would seem that there is from the investigation and discovery of a young electrician, Earl Hanson, of Los Angeles, Cal. He recently demonstrated to the mayor of Los Angeles and the president of the telephone company that his apparatus could send music, talk of any kind, whispers and signals without wires. His device is so light and small and yet so effective that when attached to a bicycle used by a policeman, constant communication could be maintained with the laboratory. One or one thousand receivers can be attached, and each hears as distinctly as if they were in the room from which the sounds proceeded. The only explanation of this marvelous process given is that the inventor used very low frequency wireless waves in a new way. The great drawback to wireless telephony and telegraphy has always been that the air is one great "line" and always busy. Hanson's plan aims to overcome this, to send messages though the air is split up around him by the operation of other stations!

All this is wonderful and may require more demonstration to

prove its adaptability, but science is at work and it is not improbable that wireless telephones for rural use and purpose may ere long be successfully accomplished.

The Jasper, Fla., *News*, voices this prophetic hope in a well-written article which recently appeared in that paper, and we take pleasure in presenting that portion herewith as a compliment to editorial enterprise and a far-seeing vision of coming events.

"An improvement, which we confidently look forward to as being made in the not far distant future, will be the establishment of a wireless telephone system at every county seat in connection with the rural free delivery service.

"By means of this wireless telephone, the carrier would be enabled to communicate with the post office from any point while serving his route, and the post office could call any carrier desired and deliver a message which the carrier would get without even stopping his automobile.

"The advantage of an arrangement of this kind can be easily seen. The farmer could meet the mail at his number and over the wireless, could call a doctor, send a telegram, inquire about the market direct with the buyer, have Uncle Sam to run his errands, and many other things too numerous to mention.

"Truly, we are living in a wonderful age, but more wonderful things are coming."

#### Parcel Post Exhibits at County Fairs

One of the methods by which the Department is bringing the advantages of the parcel post to the attention of the people of the United States is by means of exhibits at State and county fairs and other civic expositions. While there is no appropriation available for such purpose, postmasters who are interested in this government experiment to bring producer and consumer together and so reduce the cost of living expense have shown such desire to aid in this matter and their efforts have been so generally successful in this direction that space has been freely given and great benefits have followed in all communities where this plan has been tried.

From reports at hand it appears that ninety-four of such displays have been held in various States and that thirty additional fairs were yet to be held at which such parcel post exhibits were to be made a special feature. By tens of thousands, both city and rural populations have been afforded an opportunity to see working demonstrations of the farm-to-table service and been enabled to profit thereby.

These exhibits are generally so instructive to the people, the farmers so willing to show by card or samples of goods what they can furnish, and the postmasters so ready to cooperate in every way to make these postal exhibits a success by showing different styles of containers, the best method of packing, etc., that no opportunity should be lost where county fairs are held to secure space for such exhibits and make the most creditable display possible. The postmasters are the proper parties for carrying out the purposes of the Government in this connection and the Department is anxious that such opportunities be availed of that the advantages thus offered may be utilized to their fullest extent.

### The Great Express Service of the Government

The parcel post, the great express service of the Government, is now used so generally and for so many purposes that the mention of some of the things that are being shipped may be of interest. For instance, at the Lincoln County fair at Merrill, Wis., some time ago, there was an exhibit of a take-down house all the parts of which had been sent to Merrill by parcel post. Indeed the shipment of lumber by parcel post is not now an uncommon thing, due attention being paid to postal requirements.

At Gridley, Cal., a patron entered the office with several small sacks of some heavy material and asked to have them forwarded. The clerk after weighing them regarded the sacks with some suspicion and upon inquiry of the shipper learned that the sacks contained dirt, soil from a farm, which he was sending to the State University for analysis. Another patron appeared at the office in the morning with a package of meat under his arm and posted the parcel to a family in Marysville, Cal., remarking at the time that Mrs. ——— ordered this meat for supper!

An enterprising farmer at Burke, Va., advises the Postmaster at Washington, D. C., that he would kill a steer on December 1, and would sell the cuts of meat at one-third less than Washington retail prices. His offer was advertised in a farm list and in a parcel post trade paper and before the steer was killed the meat had all been engaged. The cuts were sent to the customers in market baskets and containers. The farmer was offered \$35 for the steer on the hoof, but realized \$45 by individual sales and the hide paid for help in parting and dressing for market. Orders came from Washington, Baltimore, and even from Long Island, N. Y.

The postmaster of Denver, Colo., reported that on Thanksgiving Day, 1914, more than 1,000 perishable parcels, 80 per cent of which contained turkeys, were received at the Denver office and delivered in good condition.

The list of possible shipments of every conceivable kind and character could be indefinitely extended, for it is known that the scope of subjects that can be handled by the parcel post is practically limitless and only awaits proper enterprise for productive profit to those who will engage in it.

The parcel post is without question a great success. There is no other measure of interest connected with the service which presents so many economic possibilities. Its great advantage over the private carriers is apparent and the benefits quickly seen in practical operation. The United States mail goes everywhere throughout the length and breadth of the country. Private expresses are governed by the avenues of profit. The Government is not concerned about profit but regards service as of paramount importance, hence it directs its activities to all regions alike, going where there are no express offices or ever likely to be. This is the great distinguishing feature of the parcel post and its benefits as can be plainly seen, are chiefly for the rural sections who would be denied these advantages were there no such service in operation.

The whole effort of the parcel post aims to furnish an exceedingly reasonable method of interchanging commodities between the farm and city home, something which no private corporation has ever attempted or would undertake to do, all such enterprises being purely for gain and profit. The farmer can now find the opportunity he has been seeking. By some little care and attention to the conditions that assure favorable results, such as putting himself in touch with his customers, properly packing and furnishing a good article at a reasonable price, he can develop a profitable market for what he produces, reduce the cost of living to others while reaping an advantage for himself.

#### The Telephone and Parcel Post in Cooperation

Elsewhere attention is called to the future possibilities of the wireless telephone for rural uses, but in the meanwhile the many uses to which the telephone can be put in the common affairs of life is being industriously employed in all the rural sections of the

country. The farmers have learned to make daily use of this convenience and it is doubtless employed to almost as great an extent there as in the cities and commercial centers. The farmers wife can talk to the village store, or the more ambitious establishments at the county seat, or perhaps reach a neighboring city for her wants, and Uncle Sam is so anxious to oblige her and has made such ample provision for the purpose that her wants can receive instant attention and be promptly supplied, a matter gratifying alike to the customer and the merchant as well.

It was altogether different before these conveniences were available. It probably meant in those days a visit to the city or town, or if the need was not pressing the friendly aid of neighborly interest and concerns in seeing her wants supplied. In the hurry and rush of modern life taking everything for granted and considering nothing uncommon, we are apt to pay little heed to the many comforts we now enjoy, and of which this Government provision for speedily supplying our wants and needs forms no inconsiderable part.

The local merchant also comes in for his share of advantage to which the telephone and parcel post so greatly contribute. The scope of his patronage is now broadened and enlarged. One hundred and fifty miles of territory have been added to and is now tributary to the field of his industrial enterprise, and he can fairly compete with mail order houses by the lower rates of postage within this zone—quite an item in his favor—for it is practically a rate of 1 cent a pound or but little more, which with some business ability and advertising push will give him a field of opportunity wherein he can enter with every prospect of at least an equal chance with any of his competitors.

#### Training Public Officials

The following editorial article from the Washington, D. C., *Post*, while not relating to postal affairs particularly but treating of the public service generally, has yet its peculiar significance to postal affairs as 80 per cent of all public employees are in some way connected with the postal service. This very thoughtful and clearly expressed editorial contains so much of value upon a subject to which but little attention has been given, that the matter may well occupy a share of public concern in a country such as ours where so large a proportion of its people occupy public position.

The *Post* says:

There has been a steady increase in the number and variety of Government activities. As industry has become more complex more Government agencies have been created for the purpose of regulation and control. Unfortunately, improvement in methods has not kept pace with the addition of new agencies.

Touching upon this condition, Prof. Charles A. Beard, of Columbia University, supervisor of the training school for public service, recently asked:

"How can we educate the public up to an appreciation of the necessity for trained and expert service in every branch of the Government? How can we order our public service so that it will attract the ablest men and women and guarantee progressive careers to those who prove loyal and efficient? How can we develop our civil service commissions into genuine recruiting agencies capable of supplying the Government with exactly the type of service needed for any given movement and of maintaining a loyal and efficient personnel?"

If promotions were more certain in the Government service there would be no dearth of competent men to fill the places higher up. To solve this particular phase of the problem, however, it will be necessary to have the Government pay higher salaries. Better pay is now available in private industry than in the public service, and the Government has not yet reached the point where there is any general realization of the sound principle that it is better in the long run to pay high salaries to efficient men than to employ mediocre men at smaller salaries.

The universities and colleges can do their part in training young men who seek elective offices, but a man well trained for office might lack the qualities which make for political success. Many foreign cities are run by experts. A large city frequently hires its chief executive from some neighboring town. A competent manager in a small city knows that he has an excellent chance of attracting attention by good work and getting a promotion. This system has been tried out in a small way in the United States, where a number of cities have hired managers to take full charge, with indifferent results. While progress toward efficiency is apt to be slow, the increased discussion of the problem is certain to bear good results eventually.

#### For the Benefit of the Fourth Class Postmaster

While the public concern has received the utmost attention, there are, however, some questions of interest affecting the welfare of postal employees which should be given consideration. It is but common justice to consider the present method of payment to fourth-class postmasters, for it allows them but small returns for their labor. If the same high standard of efficiency



is expected of them which should obtain in the service generally, they should have their labor properly compensated. At present the law restricts the salaries to be paid according to the volume of outgoing mail at their office. The rural carrier who works under the postmaster is under no such restrictions, is better paid, and has more holiday privileges. The fourth-class postmaster may have to work half days on holidays and Sundays and has no leave of absence. The rural carrier has both. The position of postmaster may therefore be said to be less desirable than that of the carrier, though his official responsibility from the nature of his duties is greater. At the recent State convention of third and fourth-class postmasters, held at Sunbury, Pa., the question was brought up and a reform urged in the matter. There is much to be said in favor of a more equitable adjustment, and the subject can be approached without detriment to the carrier by a wider and more comprehensive view of the duties of the postmaster and a corresponding improvement in the method of payment.

The introduction of the parcel post as a great common carrier is an added feature in connection with this subject. The fourth-class postmaster receives much more mail than he sends out. This inequality which affects his pay can be largely corrected if the postmasters in cities would adopt some practical measures towards stimulating orders from city patrons for farm produce which could be shipped by mail. The organic act passed by Congress contemplated such advantageous interchange for the benefit of the fourth-class postmaster as well as the city consumer, and a steady and persistent effort in that direction by the city postmasters would greatly assist in carrying out the intention of Congress in this respect and popularize the plan in the rural sections by the reciprocal advantages it would confer. The fourth-class postmaster could, however, greatly benefit himself, even under present methods, by making an earnest and industrious effort to develop the parcel post idea in his community, embracing the opportunities of his official relation to the service by encouraging and taking an active part in every detail of postal management, of which, just now, the parcel post is so conspicuous a feature and whose more extended use among the people would so greatly advance his official as well as his personal interest.

### Public Work and Private Control

It is sometimes asked why the Post Office Department cannot be managed as if it were in the hands of a private corporation. Many reasons might be given, but a few will serve to explain the difference and perhaps enlighten the public who may expect more than the Department can perform.

In the first place, the service is throughout closely controlled by Congress through its committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, and no important variations in the system or the methods of administration can be initiated without their concurrence, and even if any particular or significant change is proposed by such committee, it is not always possible to obtain full congressional consent. Differences between the administrative heads of the Department and Congress as to the necessity or advantage of certain plans or methods, are not uncommon, especially when any proposed changes antagonize existing usage or clash with party policy or expediency. When proposed changes invade the domain where private enterprise has interests more or less valuable already established, influence may be brought to bear to counteract the reforms proposed, based on honest grounds of dissent as to the real benefit or practical advantage to be gained by the adoption of such measures. Unless it can then be shown that public interests would be benefited by the changes proposed, the Department might have difficulty to overcome this opposition.

In the next place, corporate control moves within narrower limits and exercises its power in more direct fashion. In theory a corporation is composed of its stockholders, a majority of whom nominate the board of directors. This board in turn appoints the permanent officials and they exercise full control in operation. Wide powers are given to these men and the policies advanced for extending influence and gaining profit are generally adopted. It is quite different dealing with Congress. New policies are not always accepted, sometimes rejected or ignored. It therefore follows that private concerns, having a freer hand and no complicated management to content with, can institute experiments and try methods, and if well conceived, obtain results which a more restricted authority could only perhaps with difficulty secure.

A striking contrast between public and private control is seen in the appropriation system by which the Departments are governed. Aside from the difficulty often experienced in securing additional

help when required, which would be readily given in great private concerns because of expected advantages to follow, Department needs are sometimes left unsupplied and the dispatch of business hindered by delay in this respect, or in the installation of mechanical appliances so generally used now, and which have in recent years to a very large extent, taken the place of human agencies in the business world.

Perhaps one of the greatest difficulties which obtains in public work aside from what has been already mentioned and which has hampered more rapid progress in the Post Office Department, was the tendency and practice to adhere to old-established rules and precedents. These lax methods, which were particularly apparent in the business customs and official procedure of the Department, were so firmly imbedded in its official life that it required a firm hand and a positive purpose to dislodge them. The present Postmaster General had both the courage and the desire to sweep away these relics of a bygone period and substitute newer and more suitable methods to meet progressive conditions and the Department is now conducted as it should be, and public complaints caused by these obsolete and unsuitable measures is now largely avoided.

These are some of the things that confront and have confronted the Department in its efforts towards greater efficiency. Conditions must be taken into account and understood. The Department must always be a public function and under Government control and be conducted, more or less, according to public usage. While red-tape rules and customs will to some extent remain, great progress has been made in many directions and public methods, by skilful management, brought nearer to the successes of business life, and the time is near at hand when the answer to the interrogatory first propounded, may be made in the affirmative.

### Protecting the Public Records

Among the many useful and necessary reforms accomplished by the Postmaster General may be mentioned the institution of a hall of records for the protection of the files and valuable papers which belong to the Department. These records contain the history of postal administration from the beginning and deserve the most careful attention, not only on account of their sentimental but their historical value as well. The rise and progress of this

index to our developing greatness in postal progress from the days of Benjamin Franklin to our own times, is recorded in the volumes which form the great official library of the Department. The opinions, acts and State papers of every Postmaster General are found here and a complete history of the whole postal administration could be compiled from these records.

It is a matter of some surprise that preceding administrations paid so little attention to the care and proper housing of these valuable files and papers. For years they were stored in the garrets and attic of the old Post Office Building, inconvenient of access, and so limited in space that any semblance of order was next to impossible. Lying there for years practically undisturbed, a prey to the ravages of dust and decay, it is a wonder that they are in any condition of preservation whatever. The traces of neglect and ill-usage has left its marks visibly upon these old volumes, and but for the quality of the material then used and the care in binding then demanded for public documents, they would be of but little service now.

To Postmaster General Burleson belongs the credit of rescuing these valuable archives of his Department from ultimate destruction. Space was found on the first floor of the building for storage and arrangement. A force of clerks from each Bureau was detailed for this work. The books and papers were removed from the nooks and corners to which they were relegated and under careful supervision located in the place provided for them. Accumulations of dust brushed off, bundles of documents neatly arranged and tied anew, frayed edges and loosened covers attended to, and the more important historical records set apart for rebinding when necessary. Protected now from danger, easy of access and convenient for reference, with space and light to assist in general preservation, these records can now be readily consulted, time is saved in search and conditions in every way made serviceable and satisfactory. With an elaborate and carefully devised system of indexing, this official record is perhaps the most complete of any of the Departments of the Government.

#### **Registry, Insurance, and Collect-on-Delivery Services for the Fiscal Year 1916**

The number of pieces of mail registered, insured, and sent collect on delivery during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1916, is shown in the following statement:

<i>Registered</i>		1916
aid registrations:		
Domestic letters and parcels.....	29,091,506	
Foreign letters and parcels.....	5,179,325	
Total paid registrations.....	34,270,831	
Free registrations—official.....	4,965,738	
Total paid and free.....	39,236,569	
Amount collected for registry fees.....	\$3,427,083.10	

<i>Insured</i>	
Fourth-class (domestic parcel post):	
Total pieces insured (3-, 5-, 10-, and 25-cent fees).....	24,936,082
Total fees.....	\$1,067,192.29

<i>Collect on Delivery</i>	
Fourth-class (domestic parcel post) pieces...	6,300,546
Fees.....	\$630,054.60

#### Readjustment of Rate for Second-Class Mail

One of the vexatious problems with which the Department has to deal is that relating to second-class mail matter which costs the Government several times over what is received therefrom in the way of revenue. In March, of 1911, Congress passed a joint resolution authorizing the appointment of a commission to investigate the subject and make a report thereon. The president selected Mr. Justice Hughes, of the Supreme Court, President Lowell, of Harvard University, and Mr. Harry A. Wheeler, of Chicago. This commission found that the cost to the Government of handling and transporting this mail was about 6 cents a pound for which the Government received but 1 cent a pound. The Department recommended an increase to 2 cents a pound which was approved by the commission. February 22, 1912, the report was submitted to Congress by the President, who urged favorable consideration, but so far no action has been taken. Suggestions as to desirable changes in relation to second-class mail matter have been made to Congress by Postmaster General Burleson, in which several ideas as to a more equitable arrange-

ment were proposed, by which the Government would get a compensation more nearly in accord with the expense of this service, but without result, and the whole subject remains undisposed of with the prevailing rate still in force. This class of mail increased 93,184,891 pounds over that of the year 1915, notwithstanding the higher cost of paper and material. The readjustment of rates is held to be necessary in view of the disproportion of revenue to the cost of handling and transportation.

Postmaster General Charles Emory Smith in his annual report to Congress in 1900, referring to the cost of carrying second-class mail matter as hindering the progress of rural delivery extension, said:

"In my last annual report it was shown that if a class of publications which now, under an evasion of the purpose of the law, pay the second-class rate of postage, were really made to pay the third-class rate, as they ought to do, it would bring an additional revenue to the Government of \$12,343,612. This amount is lost through an abuse that can be and ought to be rectified. It is a public contribution without any public advantage for the sole benefit of a few private interests. . . . If it is a question between favoring a very limited number of publishers and favoring twenty-one millions of people who live on the farms of the United States, there ought to be no hesitation in serving the many rather than the few. The abuse should be uprooted as a public duty, the national delivery service should be undertaken as a public policy, and when through the overthrow of the wrong the right can be established without the slightest additional burden, the appeal becomes irresistible."

#### Peculiar Customs of European Rural Delivery

Some years ago at the request of Postmaster General Gary, the Secretary of State addressed a letter to each of our ambassadors and ministers in Europe, asking for information touching the extent and character of rural delivery in the countries to which they were accredited. In the answers received it was shown, for example, that in Great Britain there was substantially a house-to-house rural delivery, only the most inaccessible domiciles being left unvisited. The English rural postman, traveling chiefly on foot, walks from 15 to 18 miles a day, for an average pay of 18 shillings, or \$4.50 a week. A paternal government provides him with a uniform, gives him \$5 a year to buy shoes, furnishes him medical attendance when sick, and permits him to retire on a small pension after ten years of faithful service.

In France rural carriers, who also travel on foot, are paid a mileage of  $7\frac{1}{4}$  centimes a kilometer, or not quite  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cents a mile, for the distance they cover. The average length of a route is from 10 to 15 miles, and they are required to cover it every day in the year, Sunday included. They receive an allowance for clothing, and may retire on a pension at the end of fifteen years. The service extends into every commune, and practically all France is covered by rural free delivery.

In Germany the delivery of mails in remote rural districts is not exactly free. Extra postage is charged, part of which goes to the carrier and part to the government. The pay of carriers, outside of this allowance, is from 700 to 900 marks a year, with 100 marks additional for house rent (a German mark being equivalent to 24 cents of our money).

In Austria-Hungary the rural carrier is hired by the postmaster of the local office to which he is attached and paid by him. He is authorized to collect a fee of half a cent on all letters and an eighth of a cent on all newspapers delivered by him. His average pay is about \$120 a year. To earn this sum he travels 10 miles a day, always on foot. Before he can enter upon his duties he has to make a deposit of \$80 (or two-thirds of a year's salary) with the postmaster as security for carrying out his contract.

The Belgian rural carrier makes a daily round trip of 15 or 16 miles on foot, and is paid a salary which varies according to the supposed cost of living in the district where he serves, but which seldom exceeds \$250 a year. He is denied the right to vote, and prohibited from taking part in politics.

#### What Was a Newspaper? Act of 1825

During the administration of Postmaster General Wickliffe of Kentucky the question was raised what in the meaning of the postal law, Act of 1825, constitutes a newspaper. *The Shipping and Commercial List* and *New York Price Current* claimed that it was a newspaper and entitled to the newspaper rate. It had been so regarded prior to 1837, but afterwards as subject to letter postage. The Postmaster General wanted light upon the subject and the question was submitted to the Attorney General, Hon. H. S. Legare for an opinion. As his spirited reply may interest newspaper men of today as well as others, the principal parts of the opinion are subjoined:

"The only light, a very uncertain one, is the use of the word, 'newspaper' in common parlance or in the English Stamp Acts. According to the statute it must be (1) periodically published; (2) at intervals not exceeding two days; (3) must contain public news or remarks thereon; (4) that it contain not more than two sheets. Thus it may be admitted that the paper must be published at short intervals, but what is a short interval? There are many weekly newspapers, why not monthly? It may be doubted whether the intervals need be exactly stated. The passing events may be diversified according to the tastes, the fancies, the wants or convenience of mankind. The monthly catalogue of new publications will be of interest to a scholar, proceedings of tribunals to a lawyer, theaters or new fashions in dress to the idle and the gay, etc., bulletins of battles to a soldier, price currents to a merchant, etc. A newspaper is more likely to please a majority of readers which meets all tastes. Why should a devout man be annoyed by puffs of opera dancers, members of a total abstinence society with tempting sales of wines and liquors, a plodding man of business with dissertations on books, or a bookish man with columns of business advertisements?"

The decision states in conclusion that "*The Shipping and Commercial List* to be treated as a newspaper must be sent open and without any written signature or note."

#### Women in the Post Office Department

The women of the United States owe an everlasting debt of gratitude to Frances E. Spinner for opening to them the door of opportunity for employment in the public service. Salmon P. Chase was Secretary of the Treasury in the administration of President Lincoln and General Spinner was the Treasurer of the United States. Many of the clerks of the Treasury had joined the army, and General Spinner suggested to the Secretary the employment of women in their stead. Though his suggestion met with considerable opposition at the time, the wishes of General Spinner finally prevailed, and Secretary Chase gave his consent to the appointment of women, and the avenues of public employment were opened to them.

Since that time the employment of women in the public service has become general, and they may now be found in all the Departments, in post offices and as mail carriers on the post roads of the United States. The most recent register of employees in the Post Office Department shows that it had upon its pay rolls for the Department proper, sixty-two women receiving \$1,200 per



annum, thirty-two at \$1,400 per annum, ten at \$1,600 per annum, three at \$1,800, forty-three at \$1,000 per annum, besides many more at lesser salaries. The act of General Spinner in opening the door of the public service to women doubtless had its general effect in private employment as well, for from the close of the Civil War the entrance of women into the business relations of the country may be safely dated.

Many of the women in the Departments occupy positions of responsibility and importance, and fill such positions with credit to themselves and the service as well.

#### Railroad Accidents and the Construction of Mail Cars

There were 163 railroad accidents during the fiscal year, 1916, of which 155 resulted in injuries to clerks, and eight, exclusive of those in which clerks were injured, resulted in loss or damage to mail.

The following table shows the kind and construction of the mail cars in which accidents to clerks occurred:

Kind of car	Number of cars in accidents	Number of clerks in these cars	Clerks killed or died as result of injuries	Clerks seriously injured in these cars	Clerks slightly injured in these cars	Total clerks injured and killed in these cars
Wood.....	57	76	1	18	42	61
Wood-steel reinforced.....	18	25	.....	12	9	21
Steel.....	67	258	1	23	86	115
Steel underframe.....	22	57	.....	9	21	30
Total.....	164	416	2	67	158	227

#### Public Ownership of Postal Telegraphs and Telephones

##### Opinion of Postmaster General Burleson

Postmaster General Burleson, in his annual report to Congress for 1916, made the following statement regarding Postal Telegraphs and Telephones:

"As the former reports pointed out, the private ownership of telephone and telegraph utilities places in private hands the

control of important vehicles for the transmission of intelligence, and therefore infringes upon a function reserved by the Constitution to the National Government. Operation of these facilities inherently as well as constitutionally belongs to the Postal Service. Attention again is called to the legal precedents and the attitude of former postmasters general, as briefly stated in my report for 1914:

"That it has been the policy of this Government to ultimately acquire and operate these electrical means of communication as postal facilities, as is done by all the principal nations, the United States alone excepted, is evidenced by the fact that the first telegraph line in this country was maintained and operated as a part of the Postal Service, and further by the Act of July 24, 1866, which provided for the Government acquisition of the telegraph lines upon the payment of an appraised valuation, and again by the act of 1902, which directed the Postmaster General 'to report to Congress the probable cost of connecting a telegraph and telephone system with the Postal Service by some feasible plan.'

"It is an interesting fact that, whereas policies of Government have been advocated and some adopted, the constitutionality of which have been seriously questioned, the principle of Government ownership and control of the telegraph and telephone finds its greatest strength in the Constitution. This opinion has been shared by practically all Postmasters General of the United States, who have held that the welfare and happiness of the nation depend upon the fullest utilization of these agencies by the people, which can only be accomplished through Government ownership."

#### Liquor Carried by the Mails

In view of the rapid spread of prohibition sentiment in the country during the past few years, it may be of interest to know that the activities then already apparent to check in every possible way convenient access to this demoralizing evil, found in a limited sense the aid and support of the Post Office Department.

There was a growing suspicion that traffic in the carrying of liquor from one point to another on the lines of the star-route service by carriers was being conducted, and this suspicion afterwards developed into loud and persistent complaints which finally reached the Department and attracted official attention. It was stated that liquor was being conveyed by these carriers to points in local option territory and even distributed among the Indians,

a practice which the Government was particularly anxious to prevent. The matter was finally brought to the attention of Postmaster General Von Meyer who at once took steps to interfere with this traffic. After some consultation as to the best means of stamping out this evil, a clause was inserted in the advertisement for star-route service and later embodied in every contract upon which awards were made. This statement says: "It is further agreed that the contractor or carrier shall not transport intoxicating liquor from one point to another on this route while in the performance of mail service."

This positive Governmental interference with the traffic in liquor by means of the mails may not be generally known, and it is mentioned here that credit might be given to Postmaster General Von Meyer for an act which destroyed a growing evil, covertly conducted, and put a stop to a practice which was doing damage in a great many sections.

By Act approved March 3, 1917, providing for appropriations for the Post Office, no letter, postal card, circular, newspaper, etc., containing any advertisement of spirituous, vinuous, malted, fermented or other intoxicating liquor of any kind, or containing a solicitation of an order for said liquors, shall be deposited in or carried by the mails of the United States, or be delivered by any postmaster or letter carrier addressed and directed to any person, firm, corporation or association at any place or point in any State or territory of the United States, at which it is by the law in force in such State and Territory at that time unlawful to advertise or solicit orders for such liquors or any of them respectively.

#### How the Post Office Department Helps the Farmer

Of all the great Executive Departments, the Post Office comes closest to the people and is of particular interest to the farmer living away from the great avenues of postal service supply. The Postmaster General, from his service in Congress, where the needs of the farmer are known, coupled with the opportunities of his present position, was able to render him a great service, and that he has done so, that his administration has shown his successful efforts in this direction cannot be questioned nor denied.

The Parcel Post with all its beneficent possibilities and advantages received early consideration. It meant so much to the farmer that zealous and persistent attention was wisely directed to obtain the utmost that could be accomplished. Weight limits

were extended, postage reduced by zone expansion, and the project put upon such practical basis that great benefits are already assured and further progress only waits legislative sanction. City and country are now brought together. Suburban express, the result of motor service, gives the farmer an easily reached and remunerative market and the consumer finds upon his daily table the fresh products which this rapid means of communication from the farm can so readily supply. The Parcel Post is one of the most popular measures of this administration and everything possible has been done to foster and perfect it.

The Rural Free Delivery with its millions of patrons, of which over 650,000 were added within the past three years, tells the story of administrative accomplishment. The great success of rural delivery is peculiarly the farmers triumph. He is now on a par with his neighbor in the cities in all that enterprising postal service can give. Taken both together, the widely admitted success of the Parcel Post as well as the rural delivery, a chapter of achievement has been written of which the Department is justly proud and against which criticism can find no ground for righteous complaint.

But this is not all that this administration has done for the man in the country. The energetic application of the experimental legislation appropriating \$500,000 for participation in the construction of improved highways has brought forth an additional appropriation of \$75,000,000, which will be expended by the Federal Government, in cooperation with the States, for the improvement of roads over which mail delivery is performed, or on which it may be located hereafter. The Rural Credit and Good Roads bills are subjects of profound interest which even partisan prejudice cannot minimize or obscure. The tremendous advantage which these two great measures afford the farmer will be readily admitted and recognized when seen in practical operation. The need of such beneficent help has long been felt and these two bills should make the lot of the farmers much easier. They have been getting reasonably good prices for their products and are generally prosperous, but the fact remains that but few hold their land free of incumbrance. Complete ownership will now be possible. With federal aid to road construction and this new rural credits law, it should not be long until the greatest prosperity the country sections have ever known should be an accomplished fact.

### Expediting the Mail on Star Routes

Attention is called elsewhere to the benefit of motor vehicle service in rural delivery, and it is now proposed to introduce this advantage in the star-route service as well. Until a short while ago there was no authority for any particular form of conveyance to be used in this connection. With the advent of automobiles and other motor vehicles, it became evident that great opportunities presented themselves by which the transportation of mails on this class of routes could be measurably expedited and during the present administration the law was so amended that the mode of transportation could be specified.

The demand of the day is for the rapid conveyance of mails in every direction and people are no longer satisfied to put up with the practices and methods of other days. That mails have been conveyed in this service with "due celerity, certainty and security" was not enough. Money is paid for service and the best that can be given is required. So it was decided to expedite star-route service. While there are a number of routes on which automobiles are now used in view of the provision of law as covered by the order of the Postmaster General, August 14, 1916, amending section No. 1424 to correspond with the law as amended, steps are now being taken in connection with the award of contracts for the the four-year term beginning July 1, 1917, which includes the contract section from Maine to West Virginia, to require the use of motor vehicles wherever the importance of the route seemed to warrant and weather conditions would permit the use of such conveyance. One hundred and forty advertisements are now pending for such service in this contract section.

This is going to be a great accommodation for all routes where such service can be employed and will give the people the best mail facilities that can be devised. It will hasten the receipt and dispatch of mails by means of rural carrier connections, be of great advantage to the business men along such routes, expedite newspaper delivery and in many cases save twenty-four hours over the present method. Every effort will be made to introduce this more rapid service as quickly and widely as the laws will permit. If it is found to work well in this first contract section where it is to be tried, it will be extended to others in regular succession until the star-route service everywhere has the benefit of this improved means of communication.

**Abraham Lincoln Postmaster in 1837**

So much has been said and written about Abraham Lincoln that it would seem as if nothing new could be mentioned. In fact his history and biography are as well known to the school children as that of George Washington, but it is probably not generally known to the postmasters of the country that he was at one time in the postal service as a postmaster, and in a book devoted entirely to postal affairs it may be of interest to state the fact that this additional incident in his life and public career may be added to what is already known.

Mr. T. H. Bartlett, in the *Boston Transcript*, says:

It will interest Lincoln lovers to learn that, as far as known, probably the first time that Abraham Lincoln's name was mentioned in print was in the United States Biennial Register for 1837. It was in the Post Office Department, as "Postmaster at New Salem, Ill., Abraham Lincoln, 1 quar., 10-19-48." The Register contained the names of every officer and employe for that year.

So people who keep scrap books in which to note peculiar events and occurrences in the lives of great men may add this little item to their collection, for everything connected with the life of Abraham Lincoln is worthy of notice.

**A Central Accounting Office for Each County**

A very notable and far-reaching measure of public administration in the conduct of the Post Office Department was enacted in the past session of Congress by which, in order to promote economy in the distribution of supplies and in auditing and accounting, the Postmaster General was authorized to designate districts and central offices in such districts through which supplies shall be distributed and accounts rendered. This means in other words that one postmaster in a county is hereafter to distribute supplies for the other post offices and render an account to the auditor for all the offices in a certain county or district, thus simplifying the whole subject and placing the business involved at each of these offices under one central control. This is, however, not to give such central office authority to abolish offices, to change officers or employees in offices included in such district.

The law goes into effect July 1, 1917, and the Postmaster General will appoint a committee, of which the First Assistant Postmaster General will probably be chairman, to establish the

system and select the central office in each district or county to which the other offices are to report, and under whose general control this plan is to be conducted.

### Millions of Money for Good Roads

That good roads are an important factor in the spread of civilization is a statement which no one will dispute. Imperial Rome in the zenith of its power perfectly understood this. The marvellous genius and industry which constructed its great highways of commerce and travel, works which have been the admiration of all succeeding ages, are yet splendid even in their decaying greatness. Prescott, the historian, in his romantic history of Peru, tells of the wonderful engineering skill displayed in the reigns of the early Peruvian rulers in the building of their great military roads, which served alike the purpose of a peaceful people as well as the rapid assembling of its armies for warlike action. No nation now neglects this very important part of its economic life, and the United States having become a power in universal civilization is fully alive to all the measureless advantages which good roads afford.

Material prosperity waits upon road development and land values rise in proportion to road improvement. A few striking instances may be mentioned as illustrating this fact. *Wallace's Farmer* has stated that:

"In Franklin County, New York, where 24 miles of good roads have been built, eight pieces of land selected at random increased 27.8 per cent in value. In Lee County, Virginia, which built eighty-four miles of roads, land advanced 25 per cent in value. Spottsylvania County, in the same state, improved forty-one miles of roads, and the land adjoining sold for \$44.75 where previous to the improvement it had been bought for just \$20 less per acre. After Manatee County, Florida, had constructed sixty-four miles of macadam and shell highway, the land along the road increased more than \$20 per acre in less than two years, and the land a mile away from the road showed an increase of \$10 an acre. In Wood County, Ohio, where land has been drained and bounded by limestone pikes, the values have risen from \$70 to \$250 per acre."

The *New York Journal of Commerce* says "there are few agencies that are so fruitful of economic good, social and political solidarity,

and even national spirit." The very great desire of the Post Office Department to extend and improve the rural delivery service is an ever present argument in favor of good roads, without which no extensions or improvements are possible. The life of the country church, the country school, the whole question of intensive and scientific farming is involved in the subject of good roads, and in its wider and broader aspect the question takes on a new and a very significant meaning. Originally intended to promote and foster the arts of peace, military needs now claim national attention. Quoting again from the *Journal of Commerce*: "Mobilization, defense, and the transportation of troops, munitions, and supplies, are in a large part dependent upon an adequate system of highways, especially along the sea coasts and national borders. The experience of all the warring nations of Europe in the present conflict, are ample proof of this. Only the future will show whether or not these objects have been kept in view when the national appropriation is spent."

The Government has set aside for the year ending June 30, 1919, the sum of \$14,550,000 as an apportionment to the States to aid in the construction and maintenance of rural post roads in accordance with the provision of the Federal aid roads law. \$20,000,000 will be apportioned for 1920, and \$25,000,000 for 1921. This is the third apportionment under the law, \$4,850,000 having been apportioned for 1917 and \$9,700,000 for 1918. The Bureau of Public Roads states that the expenditures for road and bridge building in the United States have increased from about \$80,000,000 a year in 1904 to \$282,000,000 in 1915, or more than 250 per cent.

These figures are as amazing as they are impressive, and they must carry to the mind of the reader the solicitude of his government for all that makes for national prosperity and advancement. There was a time when good roads were a luxury and only a few States in the East paid any attention to this question. With the advent of the automobile came a great change. Rides for pleasure as well as for gainful pursuits required better conditions, and for both purposes good roads became everywhere a question of paramount importance. The farmer whose improved surroundings permitted this now common luxury, wanted the benefit of it, and the demand for better road conditions found its way into the



halls of legislation in the States, and in the Congress of the Nation, and the answer to this demand upon the part of the Federal government is the magnificent appropriation which is now available and to be expended for this far reaching purpose.

Rural delivery in which the rural resident is so greatly interested will profit most by this liberal government provision, it being originally intended for post road purposes, of which rural delivery is now the principal and most important part. The rural life of the country is to be bettered in every way by the spread of this means of postal communication. The Post Office Department is always ready to listen to every suggestion which makes for greater comfort and convenience in this direction, and to act promptly when resulting advantages can be shown. Therefore, the sections where rural delivery is not as fully introduced and developed as it might be, or inviting fields for exploration and administrative action are not yet reached, the people for whose benefit this money is to be used should get in touch with the Department and bring to its attention whatever information upon the subject they may possess which might be fashioned into useful results. The Department has many eyes but cannot see all and know all, and this is where outside assistance can be of great advantage, and would be most gladly welcomed. Postal patrons are the working partners of the Postmaster General in all that concerns the improvement and extension of the service, and if they will take the same active interest that he does and cooperate with the Fourth Assistant Postmaster General, in whose Bureau this rural delivery work is centered, great advances in all directions may be readily made.

#### \$14,550,000 for Rural Post Roads

Apportionment to the States from government funds to aid in the construction and maintenance of rural postroads in accordance with the Federal aid roads law for the year ending June 30, 1919, is as follows:

Alabama.....	\$313,456	Maryland.....	130,871
Arizona.....	205,540	Massachusetts.....	221,261
Arkansas.....	250,018	Michigan.....	435,356
California.....	456,167	Minnesota.....	425,865
Colorado.....	257,278	Mississippi.....	268,751
Connecticut.....	92,216	Missouri.....	508,603
Delaware.....	24,411	Montana.....	298,520
Florida.....	170,723	Nebraska.....	319,445
Georgia.....	403,909	Nevada.....	193,229

New Hampshire.....	62,610	Kentucky.....	292,984
New Jersey.....	177,357	Louisiana.....	203,755
New Mexico.....	238,634	Maine.....	144,807
New York.....	749,674	Rhode Island.....	34,972
North Carolina.....	342,556	South Carolina.....	215,014
North Dakota.....	229,585	South Dakota.....	243,175
Ohio.....	558,043	Tennessee.....	340,663
Oklahoma.....	346,489	Texas.....	876,986
Oregon.....	236,332	Utah.....	170,763
Pennsylvania.....	690,145	Vermont.....	68,128
Idaho.....	182,471	Virginia.....	298,120
Illinois.....	658,323	Washington.....	216,530
Indiana.....	406,230	West Virginia.....	159,713
Iowa.....	434,653	Wisconsin.....	382,707
Kansas.....	429,181	Wyoming.....	183,805

### Mail Extensions by Air and Motor Truck Routes

As the result of a recent conference between Postmaster General Burleson and Secretary of War Baker, and with the approval of the President, Congress has been asked to authorize the Secretary of War to turn over to the Post Office Department all military aeroplanes and motor vehicles not serviceable for military purposes, or which after the war may be dispensed with for military service.

As soon as any aeroplanes are turned over to the Post Office Department, aeroplane mail routes will be established in the country, as they now are in Italy and France.

Italy has an aerial mail route from her coast to Sardinia, and is able to deliver 500 pounds of mail in two hours. France has a similar aerial route between her coast and Corsica.

The motor trucks procured from the War Department at this time or at the close of the war will be available for the parcel post truck service. In the view of the Postmaster General, the operation of these motor-truck routes would add 100 per cent to the value of the parcel post service in the vicinity of the cities where established.

The cost of living will be reduced, it is stated, by eliminating useless and expensive operation in the postal means of communication between producer and consumer; will permit the producer to continue production and the labor incident thereto, instead of suspending production or labor while conveying produce to consumers, and will extend the postal zone of collection-and-delivery service in the vicinity of large cities to the point where the actual farmer-producer is domiciled rather than where only suburban residents and nonproducers live.

### Care Required in Preparing Contracts

Among the most important duties which a postmaster is called upon to perform is seeing that contracts for star-route service are properly filled out before being sent to the department. These contracts are of a legal nature and while the necessary provisions are plainly stated and simple enough to be easily understood, extreme care must be exercised to see that the instructions are complied with. Spaces for the signatures of the contractor, the sureties and witnesses properly filled out, dates given, names plainly written wherever required and the contractor should personally examine the contract to see that all this is carefully done. Failure to note these necessary details causes the return of the contract for correction, delaying its acceptance and imposing extra and unnecessary work upon the contract clerk. It may also be stated that as failure to perform service on the part of the contractor is liable to bring these contracts into courts of law for judicial determination, it becomes of the highest importance that nothing required to be done is omitted in preparation and the contract be correct in form and in every particular.

### Birthday of the American Postal Service

On the twenty-sixth of July, 1917, the postal service of the United States can celebrate the one hundred and forty-third anniversary of its establishment. It was on July 26, 1775, nearly a year before the independence of the colonies was proclaimed, that the freedom of postal affairs was made an accomplished fact. The British control had existed for eighty-three years, from 1692 to 1775. There was only one line then in existence along the coast with but few branches and those far between. This service was first managed by private interests under a patent from William and Mary, but afterwards directly by the English crown. The fullness of time had at length arrived, had brought the auspicious day, and postal independence was born!

Patriotic sentiment is not wanting in this country of ours, and the flag is ever the object of sincere and heartfelt devotion. The great strides in postal development from that day to this should make the pulse of every citizen, particularly every postal employe, great or small, quicken with civic pride as each successive anniversary of our great postal establishment brings the date to mind. Postmasters might well signalize the day by conspicuous display of the flag under which such tremendous progress has been made not only in postal affairs but in national greatness and glory.

## List of Postmasters General

### *Continental Congress*

Benjamin Franklin,	Pennsylvania,	July 26, 1775
Richard Bache,	Pennsylvania,	Nov. 7, 1776
Ebenezer Hazard,	New York,	Jan. 28, 1782

### *Presidents*

### *Postmasters General*

### *State*

### *Date of Appointment*

Washington,	Samuel Osgood,	Massachusetts,	Sept. 26, 1789
"	Timothy Pickering,	Pennsylvania,	Aug. 12, 1791
"	Joseph Habersham,	Georgia,	Feb. 25, 1795
Jefferson,	Gideon Granger,	Connecticut,	Nov. 28, 1801
Madison,	Return J. Meigs, Jr.,	Ohio,	April 11, 1814
Monroe,	John McLean,	Ohio,	July 1, 1823
Jackson,	Wm. T. Barry,	Kentucky,	April 6, 1829
"	Amos Kendall,	Kentucky,	May 1, 1835
Van Buren,	John M. Niles,	Connecticut,	May 26, 1840
Harrison, W. H.,	Francis Granger,	New York,	Mar. 8, 1841
Tyler,	Chas. A. Wickliffe,	Kentucky,	Oct. 13, 1841
Polk,	Cave Johnson,	Tennessee,	Mar. 6, 1845
Taylor,	Jacob Collamer,	Vermont,	Mar. 8, 1849
Fillmore,	Nathan K. Hall,	New York,	July 23, 1850
"	Samuel D. Hubbard,	Connecticut,	Sept. 14, 1852
Pierce,	James Campbell,	Pennsylvania,	Mar. 7, 1853
Buchanan,	Aaron V. Brown,	Tennessee,	Mar. 6, 1857
"	Joseph Holt,	Kentucky,	Mar. 14, 1859
Lincoln,	Horatio King,	Maine,	Feb. 12, 1861
"	Montgomery Blair,	Dist. of Col.,	Mar. 2, 1861
Johnson,	Wm. Dennison,	Ohio,	Oct. 1, 1864
"	Alex. W. Randall,	Wisconsin,	July 25, 1866
Grant,	John A. J. Creswell,	Maryland,	Mar. 5, 1869
"	Jas. W. Marshall,	New Jersey,	July 7, 1874
"	Marshall Jewell,	Connecticut,	Sept. 1, 1875
"	Jas. N. Tyner,	Indiana,	July 12, 1876
Hayes,	D. M. Key,	Tennessee,	Mar. 13, 1877
"	Horace Maynard,	Tennessee,	Aug. 25, 1880
Garfield and Arthur,	Thos. L. James,	New York,	Mar. 8, 1881
"	T. O. Howe,	Wisconsin,	Jan. 5, 1882
"	W. Q. Gresham,	Indiana,	April 11, 1883
"	Frank Hatton,	Iowa,	Oct. 14, 1884
Cleveland,	Wm. F. Vilas,	Wisconsin,	Mar. 7, 1885
"	Don M. Dickinson,	Michigan,	Jan. 17, 1888
Harrison,	John Wanamaker,	Pennsylvania,	Mar. 6, 1889
Cleveland,	Wilson S. Bissell,	New York,	Mar. 7, 1893
"	William L. Wilson,	West Virginia,	April 4, 1895
McKinley,	James A. Gary,	Maryland,	Mar. 6, 1897
"	Charles Emory Smith,	Pennsylvania,	April 22, 1898
Roosevelt,	Henry C. Payne,	Wisconsin,	Jan. 15, 1903
"	Robert J. Wynne,	Pennsylvania,	Oct. 10, 1904
"	Geo. B. Cortelyou,	New York,	Mar. 7, 1905
"	Geo. Von L. Meyer,	Massachusetts,	Mar. 4, 1907
Taft,	Frank H. Hitchcock,	Massachusetts,	Mar. 6, 1909
Wilson,	Albert S. Burleson,	Texas,	Mar. 5, 1913

# CHAPTER V

## Miscellaneous Matters

### General and Financial Summary

#### Revenue:

Entire receipts, 1916 .....	\$312,057,688.83
Ordinary postal revenues .....	303,232,143.36
From money order business .....	8,130,545.47
Postal savings .....	695,000.00

#### Expenditures:

On account of current year, 1916 .....	\$297,637,128.87
On account of previous years .....	8,566,904.27

Total expenditure .....	\$306,204,033.14
Excess of revenue over expenditure, 1916 .....	5,853,655.69

#### Rural free delivery, 1916:

Cost per patron, 1915 .....	\$2,060
Cost per patron, 1916 .....	1,966
Annual cost, 1916 .....	51,715,616.00

#### City delivery, 1916, 34,000 carriers:

City delivery, cost of, 1916 .....	\$43,000,000
Cost per capita (estimated) .....	1.75

#### Star route, 1916:

Annual cost .....	\$7,726,975.00
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#### Postal savings:

Number of depositors, 1916 .....	602,937
Balance to credit of depositors, 1916 .....	\$86,019,885.00

#### Money orders:

Orders issued, 1916 .....	121,636,818
Amount .....	\$719,364,950.46

#### Stamp books:

Number issued, 1916 .....	28,005,930
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#### Postal cards:

Number issued, 1916 .....	1,047,894,800
Value .....	\$10,784,307.00

#### Dead letters:

Letter and parcels received, 1916 .....	10,839,890
Money value found in undelivered letters .....	\$2,303,119.56
Net revenue from sale of undeliverable articles .....	\$53,665.69

#### Mail bags, 1916:

Number pouches available .....	600,000
Number sacks available .....	4,000,000
Cost of pouches .....	\$0.70
Cost of catcher pouches .....	.80

**Mail locks, 1916:**

Number general mail locks in use.....	1,000,000
Cost, each $8\frac{1}{2}$ cents; to repair, 3 cents	

**Division of supplies:**

Appropriation, blanks, stationery, etc., 1916.....	\$2,500,000.00
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**Special delivery:**

Amount expended for service, 1916.....	\$633,713.21
Number of pieces delivered yearly.....	32,000,000

**Railway mail service, 1916:**

Number of clerks.....	19,000
Number of mail routes.....	3,500
Salaries paid.....	\$26,000,000.00
Correct handling of mail.....	99.984 per cent
Cost of transportation.....	\$57,900.000

**Star routes:**

Number, 1916.....	11,187
Length of miles.....	147,167
Average cost per mile, length.....	\$54.16
Average cost per mile of travel.....	\$0.1026
Annual cost.....	\$7,726,975.00
Routes on which there is found rate service.....	195
Number pounds carried, 1917.....	23,411,604
Cost.....	\$280,738.08
Cost per hundred pounds.....	\$1.20
Number of Star routes discontinued on account of rural delivery service from Jan., 1904, to June, 1917.....	7,450
Cost.....	\$2,577,723
Length in miles.....	72,340

	1900	1917
Number of routes.....	22,834	11,208
Cost mile of length.....	\$19.02	\$54.56
Cost mile of travel.....	3.83 cents	10.24 cents
Cost per route.....	\$224.81	\$723.00

**Registration and insurance:**

Total registration, paid and free.....	39,236,569
Amount collected fees.....	\$3,427,053.10
Insured parcel post, total pieces.....	24,936,082
Total fees.....	\$1,067,192.29
C. O. D. pieces.....	6,300,546
Fees.....	\$630,054.60

## Items of General Interest

Statistics show that although 70 per cent of parcel post matter comes from the fifty largest cities of the country, these cities only receive 17 per cent of parcels for delivery. The smaller post offices which receive 65 per cent of the parcels, dispatch only  $9\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

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The annual readjustment of the salaries of presidential postmasters, will, according to the provisions in the postal appropriation bill for 1917, be based on the gross receipts for the four quarters ending December 31, instead of March 31, as heretofore.

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Eligibles for fourth-class postmaster places are selected in the order of their civil service rating unless good and sufficient reasons to the contrary are submitted to the Department. Of 32,000 of such eligibles, 89.5 of those whose names appeared first on the list were appointed. In 8 per cent the second highest were selected, and in 2.5 per cent, the third.

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The number of postmasters in the United States are, according to classes, 567 in the first, 2,211 in the second, 6,414 in the third, and 46,742 in the fourth class. Total, 55,934.

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Custer County, Montana, has one of the longest mail routes in the United States. This line runs from Miles City to Stacey, Olive, Broadus, Boyer, Graham, and Biddle. It is said to be 126 miles long and some contend that it is longer.

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The longest star route in the United States is from Helper to Vernal, Utah, 116 miles, and the price the Government pays is \$38,678.70 per annum. The longest route in Alaska, is overland, Barrow to Kotzebue, 650 miles. The shortest route is in Pennsylvania, from Keiser to Natalie, 65/100. There is one route in New York, Delhi to Bloomville, 8 miles and back, twelve times a week, for which the contractor receives but 1 cent per annum, no doubt considering the advantage of carrying the mail as a sufficient compensation for taking the job at such a rate.

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There are 3,010 counties in the United States, 984 have rural service and steps are being taken to see what can be done with the

remainder, though any considerable progress in such direction must be slow as a great deal of preliminary work must be done before any real action can be taken.

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That fractions count in a great business organization such as the Post Office Department, will be seen when it is stated that postmasters during the year, 1916, accounted for a total of \$131,625.90, arising from gains in fractions of a cent where stamped envelopes and wrappers were sold in odd quantities.

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The annual per capita of expenditure for postage in the United States has increased since 1912 from \$2.58 to \$3.04, and the gross postal revenue from \$246,744,015 to \$312,057,688. In the fiscal year of 1857, the first full year in which prepayment of postage by means of stamps was compulsory under the Act of March 3, 1855, the per capita use of stamps was but 19 cents. The increase of population in this period has been 257 per cent. Of postage stamp consumption 4,968 per cent.

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The sales of postage stamps and other stamped paper for the fiscal year 1916 aggregated \$277,728,025.20, an increase of \$21,521,481.49, the greatest sales and the largest increase ever recorded, exceeding the entire sales of the fiscal year 1873, which amounted to \$20,324,817.50.

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The Post Office Department was removed to Washington, D. C., first Monday in December, 1800, the seat of Government being changed to the District of Columbia at that time.

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Over 100 years ago the question of patronage was already a disturbing feature in the management of public affairs. Gideon Granger, of Connecticut, Postmaster General in 1814, who had been an active and efficient official in the administration of President Madison, lost his place on account of some disagreement with the President, regarding the appointment of postmasters. It is not clear whether he resigned or was displaced, but the differences of opinion with President Madison led to his retirement from the service.

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Joseph Habersham, of Georgia, Postmaster General in the administration of General Washington, 1795, was the first one of



the long line of Postmasters General to sit in the Capital of the Nation, he coming to Washington when the seat of Government was established there in the year 1800.

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Post route and rural delivery maps made by the Government are on a scale of 1 inch to the mile. These maps show all public roads, rural routes, school houses, churches, streams, etc., and negative prints can be purchased at 35 cents each by application to the Third Assistant Postmaster General.

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The number of claims filed with the Solicitor for the Post Office Department in 1916, for the value of postage stamps lost by burglary of post offices, was 690, amounting to \$144,440.54, as compared with 720 claims, amounting to \$197,011.88, filed in 1915. It will be seen that while the number of claims is approximately the same, the amount is \$52,571.34 less.

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It was the custom in 1857 and prior thereto, to publish the names of the postmasters in connection with the post offices as is indicated by an old Postal Guide published by D. D. T. Leech at that time. This was then easily enough done, for the offices then numbered but 13,600 and changes were not as frequent as at present. The First Assistant Postmaster General had in his Bureau 18 clerks, the Second Assistant, 26, the Third Assistant, 25, and the Chief Clerk of the Department, who had charge of the Inspection Service, had 18. There were then but 11 distributing offices in all of New England including Pennsylvania, 8 in Virginia, and the Carolinas, 3 in Georgia, 4 in Ohio, 2 in Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Iowa, and 1 each in Maryland, Michigan, Indiana, Texas, and California. Aaron V. Brown, of Tennessee, was the Postmaster General. The abbreviation for Massachusetts was then "M.S." as is seen by an old dating stamp of that period.

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In 1868 money orders were issued at the rate of 10 cents for all orders not exceeding \$20. By act approved June 8, 1872, the rate was reduced to 5 cents for all orders not exceeding \$10. By this change the Government lost, in the two succeeding years on account of this reduction, 2.84/100 on every order issued on the 5-cent basis, showing that such rate at that time was too low.

There were 2,405 rural carriers separated from the service during the year 1915, of which number 1,228 resigned, 232 died, and 618 were removed. In 1916, there were 2,602 changes, 1,844 carriers resigned, 208 died and 550 were removed.

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Almost the entire expense incident to the operation of the rural mail service is in the compensation paid to carriers. On account of their unusual duties, which include the sale of stamps and stamped paper, registration of mail, transaction of money-order business, etc., duties not required of city delivery carriers, it is stated that carriers maintaining a motor vehicle of the capacity required by the Department, who work eight hours a day and carry perhaps as much as 50,000 pieces of mail a month, should receive not less than \$2,000 per annum.

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The total number of miles of railroad in the United States in 1830 was 23, and 634 miles in 1834, on which mail covering 78 miles, was carried. In 1844 the mileage had increased to 4,377 and mail carried on 3,714 miles. In 1854 the mileage was 16,720, in 1864, 35,085, in 1874, 70,278, and in 1882, 104,813, with corresponding increase of mail carriage. There are now 3,479 railroad mail routes with a length in miles of 234,175.13 and an annual travel of 502,937,359.43 miles.

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The decision of President Wilson to place all postmasters of the country under the civil service law will take away \$16,587,300 of public patronage from the customary method of disposal. At the first of the year there were 567 first-class offices in the country paying salaries ranging from \$3,000 to \$8,000, or a total of \$2,014,300. Included in this list were the post offices in New York, Chicago, St. Louis, Boston, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Detroit, Cleveland, Toledo, Columbus, Atlanta, and other large cities. There were 2,213 second-class offices, salaries ranging from \$2,000 to \$2,900, or a total of \$5,235,500. Third-class, 7,437 paying from \$1,000 to \$1,900 yearly, or a total of \$9,337,500. Fourth-class postmasters are already under the civil service law.

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From 1816 to 1845, a letter carried not over 30 miles paid 6¼ cents, over 30 and under 150 miles, paid 12½ cents, and if the

letter weighed an ounce, four times these rates were charged. In 1851 the 3-cent rate was reached for distances less than 3,000 miles, and in 1853 distance limit was abolished and the rate made uniform. This system led to a deficiency in 1860 amounting to over \$10,000,000. The restriction of service during the Civil War, it being then confined to the densely populated States of the north, allowed a surplus to appear amounting in 1863 to \$2,800,000. After the war, deficiencies became the rule for many years, diminishing, however, from year to year as the country became more thickly settled.

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By official order it is stated that the Department commends and will give record credit marks to rural carriers whose efforts result in greater quantities of farm products being transported through the mails.

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Notwithstanding the growth of the service together with the added work of the postal savings system and the parcel post, the Department service in Washington has been reduced by 200, with a resultant saving of over \$166,000 per annum because of the adoption of methods of operation which develop efficiency, and permit the changes so necessary to progressive improvement.

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It is estimated that the cost of extending rural free delivery service throughout the entire country will be \$100,000,000, additional. This seems like a vast sum for one form of public service, but country-wide extension is also a vast proposition and its benefits would be so immeasurably great if it could be accomplished, that the nation might consider the money well spent for such a purpose.

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It may not be generally known that fully 80 per cent of all civil service employees of the Government are in one way and another connected with the postal service. This shows how vast and widely extended this service must be and how intimately connected with the public welfare.

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The objectionable use to which window-delivery service in the cities of the country may be subjected, has led to an active and vigorous campaign by the Department to check the possibility of

making this public accommodation a channel for unworthy purposes, and this active effort has, it is believed, been productive of great good in such direction.

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The danger to life and limb by service in postal cars, to which attention is called elsewhere, has led to increased effort to provide cars of all-steel construction for better protection in this naturally hazardous service. One thousand of this pattern have within a recent period been added to those already in use and a liability law enacted for the relief of employees. The risks which must be taken in this service demand that the best possible protection that can be given should be afforded that the dangers of the rail may be lessened to the least degree.

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The mails of the United States were first carried on steamboats from one post town to another in 1813, the Government paying not over 3 cents for each letter and 1 cent for newspapers.

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Railroads were declared post routes by act of Congress in July, 1838, and the mails carried thereon.

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This administration is certainly doing all it can to save money in various directions. An opportunity was presented in the motors returned to the Department for repair. These motors have been neglected in many instances through indifference or lack of mechanical knowledge on the part of postal employees. Each returned motor is now given careful examination by an expert electrician and from the knowledge thus gained, additional instructions as to proper handling of this class of equipment will be sent out. The same is true of old cancelling machines which have lain idle for a number of years but by the adoption of newly designed mechanical attachments have been converted into serviceable equipment at a nominal cost.

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The increase in expenditure for rural delivery by periods was as follows: 1897, first year, \$14,840. Third year, 1900, increased to \$420,433. In 1905, to \$20,864,885. In 1910, to \$36,914,769, and in 1916 to \$51,715,616.

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Revision of the rural delivery service to eliminate duplication, unnecessary retracing and unjustifiable special facilities was con-

ducted in 329 counties in twenty-nine States during the fiscal year of 1916, at a reduction in cost of \$1,359,162. This saving with that made in readjustments in the fiscal year of 1915, made it possible to grant all applications for new service and extensions where the requirements have been met. It is estimated that the whole territory now covered by rural service, with such necessary revision, could be operated at a reduction in cost of \$3,500,000.

The commercial shortage in the paper industry is being to some extent remedied, at least so far as the Post Office Department can aid and assist, by urging the cooperation of every employe in the conservation of the waste paper in all of the larger post offices of the country. Paper-baling machines are now supplied to the postmasters for this purpose, which not only contributes to economy in use and adds to the visible supply, but is a matter of revenue as well, for what was formerly regarded as waste, and destroyed, is now made a matter of profit.

The numberless curiosities gathered from unmailable and unreclaimed articles which found their way into the Dead Letter Office from time to time, together with the many articles of postal interest to those who delight in antiquities—the old mail coaches used in the west, the dog sledges used in the Alaskan service, the carriers in uniform of all nations and the many features of interest too tedious to enumerate here and which formed a veritable collection of postal wonders and delighted thousands of people when gathered for display purposes on the first floor of the Post Office Department are now, in part at least, in the National Museum at Washington and are well worthy a visit when people come to the Capital City on a sight-seeing tour.

The period of greatest activity in extension and general progress of Rural Delivery was from 1900 to 1905, the appropriations running from \$450,000 in 1900 to \$21,116,000 in 1905. On February 1, 1902, the rural letter carriers were placed under the civil service by executive order.

Salary increases in the Rural Delivery service have been as follows: August 1, 1897, \$300; July 1, 1898, \$400; July 1, 1900, \$500; March 1, 1902, \$600; July 1, 1904, \$720; July 1, 1907, \$900; July 1, 1911, \$1,000; September 30, 1912, \$1,100; July 1, 1914, \$1,200.

## Some Old Laws and Regulations

**NOTE.**—In some old postal publications dating back to 1843 and 1857, a number of curious laws and regulations appear which may be of interest to people who delight in antiquarian research. Where no date or Act of Congress is mentioned in the paragraphs following, they refer to laws or regulations prior to 1843 or between that date and 1857. These items are published simply as indicating the peculiar views and opinions of the time, and are not to be taken as an official guide for the present day, for changes may have been made in some cases, amendments in others, some superseded by later enactment and all more or less affected by later conditions and needs. No attention can therefore be given them except as phases of other days, unless indeed existing laws and regulations make them, or some of them still operative and in force, which may be determined by consulting the laws and regulations of today.

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To Senators and Members of Congress, the franking privilege was originally limited to 2 ounces in weight, excess to be paid for. Act of March 3, 1825.

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The sum of 4 cents was allowed for advertising each letter remaining unclaimed in a post office if published in more than one newspaper. Section 35, Act July 2, 1836, Act of 1825, Section 26, allowed but 2 cents for each letter, published three times.

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Newspaper publishers could have printed or written notice sent to subscribers stating the amount due on subscription, which shall be attached to paper and the postmaster shall charge for such notice the same postage as for a newspaper. Act of 1825.

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No ship or vessel arriving at any port in the United States shall make entry or break bulk until the mails are delivered to the postmaster by the master of such ship or vessel. Penalty was \$100. Act of 1825.

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Section 1, Act of March 2, 1847, permitted deputy postmasters whose compensation for last preceding year did not exceed \$200 to send letters written by himself, and to receive through the mail written communications addressed to himself in his private business which shall not exceed  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce, free of postage. Regulation 293, allowed every deputy postmaster to frank and receive free all his letters, public and private, subject to the  $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce weight. This privilege did not extend to his wife or any other member of the family.

Paid letters might be forwarded by private opportunity to places where no post offices were established.

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Postmasters were not allowed to give credit for postage, but if it was done, letters addressed to such persons on which postage was paid or tendered by him could not be detained.

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Act of August 31, 1852, allowed letters enclosed in *stamped envelopes* to be sent out of the mail.

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By joint resolution of February 20, 1845, the Postmaster General could make contracts with railroads for carrying the mail without advertising for bids as was then the custom.

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The postmaster, or one of his assistants, was required, before office was swept or otherwise cleaned of rubbish, to collect and examine all waste paper in order to guard against possibility of loss of letters or mail matter by falling to the floor or mingling with waste paper. Observance of rule was strictly enjoined, its violation constituted a grave offense. They were also admonished in mailing letters or packets to use all wrapping paper fit to be used again, and the sale of such paper was strictly forbidden.

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As late as 1848, postmasters were officially known as "Deputy" postmasters following the old custom from the beginning.

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If a newspaper began to arrive at the office in the course of the post office quarter, deputy postmasters should demand postage in advance of the subscriber up to the end of that quarter. At the end of a quarter, they might refund postage on so many of the newspapers as had not arrived during the quarter. Advance payment of postage was invariably demanded and unless complied with no papers should be delivered even though the postage was tendered on them singly. (Act, 1825.)

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Carriers were required to receive and convey a letter (and the money for its postage when tendered) if delivered more than a mile from a post office and to hand it with the money, if paid, into the first post office at which carrier arrived. A penalty of \$50 attached on failure to do so. (Act of 1825).

Postmasters were forbidden to show any preference between one person and another in the arrival or delivery of mail by the unlawful detention of any letters, packages, pamphlet or newspaper. A fine not exceeding \$500 was the penalty and the person was forever prohibited from serving as postmaster. (Act of July 2, 1836.)

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A ferryman who by wilful neglect or refusal to transport mail across a ferry thereby delaying the same, was to be fined \$10 for every ten minutes of such delay. (Act of March 3, 1825.)

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Letter carriers employed at such post offices as the Postmaster General may direct, were allowed to collect 2 cents for each letter they delivered. For letters lodged at the post office by direction of the individual, the postmaster was to receive 1 cent; newspapers and pamphlets  $\frac{1}{2}$  cent; letters received by carrier for deposit in a post office, 2 cents, to be paid to the postmaster for a fund for compensation of carriers. This was known as the "penny post" and was in vogue until the day of free delivery.

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Section 38, Act of March 3, 1825, provided that: Any person confined in jail on any judgment in a civil case obtained in behalf of the Post Office Department, who makes affidavit that he has a claim against the General Post Office, not allowed by the Postmaster General, and shall specify such claim in the affidavit, that he could not be prepared for trial by lack of evidence, the court being satisfied in those respects, may be granted a continuance by the court until the next term, and the Postmaster General authorized to have such party discharged from imprisonment if he has no property, of any description, but such release shall not bar a subsequent execution against the property of the defendant.

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A postmaster was not allowed to receive free of postage, or frank any letter or packet, composed of, or containing anything other than paper or money. (Sec. 36; Act of July 2, 1836.)

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According to the Postal Laws and Regulations of 1843, only a free white person could carry the mail and any contractor who employed or permitted any other than a free white person to convey mail was subject to a penalty of \$20.



At post offices where the mail arrived between 9.00 o'clock at night and 5.00 in the morning, the postmaster was allowed a commission not to exceed 50 per cent on the first \$100 collected in any one quarter (Act of March 3, 1825), but the commission was afterwards increased to 70 per cent. (Act of June 22, 1854.) No allowance on this account was, however, to be made unless accompanied by a certificate signed by postmaster upon a prescribed form.

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Post riders and other carriers of mail collecting way letters on which postage had been paid, were allowed 1 cent each for such service by the postmaster when such letters were delivered at the post office.

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"Express mail service" could be established by the Postmaster General if deemed expedient, for the purpose of conveying slips from newspapers in lieu of exchanges, or letters, except such as contained money, not exceeding  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce in weight, and public dispatches, marked as above, at triple rates of postage.

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Employment of extra clerks was permitted and authorized when actually needed to answer some information called for by Congress. Copyists, etc., were paid at the rate of \$3 a day; other service \$4 when actually and necessarily employed. (Act of August 26, 1842.)

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Section 442, Chapter 60, says: "Every deputy postmaster will consider himself the Sentinel of the Department in regard to its affairs in his immediate vicinity; and he will carefully observe and promptly report to it everything tending to affect its interests or injure its reputation."

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Section 445 says: "If a mail carrier having the mail in charge becomes intoxicated, the Deputy Postmaster will instantly dismiss him, employ another at the expense of the contractor and report the facts to the Department."

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Section 382, Chapter 53. "Deputy postmasters are in the habit of settling their printer's bills only once in two or three years and then forwarding the advertising account for several quarters at

once. This must not be done. All such accounts must be forwarded with the returns to which they belong."

Section. 379. "No allowance for furniture will be made to any post office when the net proceeds do not amount to \$20 per year.

Act of 1825, Section 39, and Act of 1863, Section 41, says the carriers of the "United States City Dispatch Post" in New York, and other city dispatch posts, wherever established, are authorized to charge and collect 3 cents on each letter deposited in any part of the city, and delivered at another.

Act of 1825, Section 38, states a deputy postmaster will not open, nor suffer to be opened, any packet of newspapers, not addressed to his office, under a penalty of \$50. A penalty of \$20 was to be imposed on any person not authorized to open mails, who shall open any packet of newspapers not directed to himself.

Regulations 324 and 325 says that the franking privilege travels with the person possessing it and can be exercised in but one place at the same time, and prohibited deputy postmasters or other privileged persons from leaving their frank behind them upon envelopes to cover public or private correspondence in their absence.

### Queer Collection in Holiday Mail

Some years ago, the Cincinnati, Ohio, post office, gave an account of the queer combinations and collections of articles found loose in the mails at the Christmas season owing to the carelessness of senders. These articles vary from value to worthlessness, utility to uselessness. Money, jewelry, articles of dress, dainty ribbons to choice silk patters, tableware, and even to "corn shellers." Many of the articles named were doubtless in combinations and sent to one address, but being carelessly wrapped or addressed, they could not be assembled for identification or identified singly for delivery in the great majority of cases. The list is given for the benefit of readers who delight in curious things. These articles were held for a week for possible identification and then sent to the Dead Letter Office. No attempt has been made at classification as more interest is excited by taking them as they

come. Some of the combination must have been very amusing. List is as follows:

A cabinet photograph, pair rubber sleeves, 2 silver quarter-dollars, sewing machine shuttle, piece of white swiss goods, 2 dimes, a brass key, package common tea spoons, 5 cents and 8 child's cards from Beamsville, Ont., for Mrs. J. Carl, Tallassee, Ala., and sent to the postmaster of that place for delivery. Two unstamped letters, one to Mrs. Rebecca Washington, the other to Wm. Cummings; 65 cents, plated butter knife, gold plated lead pencil, silver quarter, 2 combination tools, 2 pen knives, lot photographs, pension affidavit of Jasper Acres, pair knit stockings, 6 books, false mustaches, pearl pen holder, box of pills, patent corn sheller, 2 electrotype plates of "Sellers Cough Syrup," yellow and purple knit hoods. Christmas cards, studs, 2 small drills, peacock feather, fountain pen, ladies brooch, butter knife, felt soles, letter in match box addressed to postmaster Berlin, sugarspoon, celluloid, ring, sleeve buttons, 25 cents, hair switch, open letter to J. Lyon, Red, Ky., Ind., which was delivered to him.

Two pen knives, dime, box violin strings, ladies fashion bazaar, bottle "Fruit Laxative," plain gold ring, ear rings, breast pin, and thimble (snide), paper needles, book "Bad Boy's diary," pencil, large pen knife, 70 cents, unstamped letter to Adelaide Long, iron hook, toy knitting machine, 2 tops of sleeve buttons, hair chain, lot crayons, chalk, letter to P. O. Wickley, Augusta, Me., unstamped, containing 70 cents in stamps, child's book "The Proud Little Lady," magic lantern, watch chain, masonic charm, 1½-dozen teaspoons, paper needles, child's mits, comforter and doll, 2 harmonicons, Bible, child's gingham dress, 2 sticks of candy. A wallet containing a gold double eagle, \$20 bill, 9 \$5 bills, 3 \$10 bills, found by F. A. Montague, in a pouch from Lewisburg, Tenn., and returned to postmaster of that town to be delivered upon receipt to the sender.

Gold plated pencil, unaddressed envelope, containing pair of lisle thread gloves, black and white stamped ribbon, uninclosed letter containing \$1 marked from "Joe to Gus." two-cent piece, gold and jet pencil holder, butter knife, tidy, white apron, pair baby socks, blank check book, dominoes, black cord and tassel, red worsted shawl, tidy. Wooden box, lot of candy, assortment of rubber sheep. Letter from R. MacFeeley, Washington, D. C., to Capt. A. M. Corliss, without envelope, one cent,

German picture cards, meerschaum cigar holder, woman's head design. Three plain rings, four watch charms, compass, horseshoe cigar cutter, two lanterns, pearl handled table knife, billiard ball, silver quarter sewed in some knit work, whisk broom, a false tooth, two black ties, three New Year cards, hair switch, curry comb, vanity case, stuffed Aunt Dinah, game "Old Maid," box Mason's blacking with brush, fiddle strings.

### Feeding the Cats

It is perhaps not generally known that cats are kept and fed at the public expense in some of the larger post offices of the country. Some years ago (and it may still be the custom) an appropriation of from \$80 to \$100 was annually made for this purpose for the benefit of the New York post office, and \$30 to \$40, spent for like service at the Philadelphia office. In an article in the *Philadelphia Record* it was stated that a man in that city had a contract for keeping these feline employees of the office in provisions, and it was also mentioned that there are about 1,000 of these useful domestic animals in the employ of the Post Office Department and they are paid for their services by food and shelter. It is estimated that about \$1,000 per annum is expended in this way at the principal post offices and large public buildings of the country.

Ferrets are also often employed for this purpose in the great public buildings in Washington when the rodents get too numerous and damage to papers and files likely to occur. The common practice of eating lunches in these government buildings tends to the spread of this annoying condition and the cats in the public service are held to be a useful and necessary convenience in hunting down and interfering with the nibbling propensities of this pest to domestic as well as public economy.

### A Couple of Distinguished Canines

Mention is made in another article of the employment of cats in post offices as "mousers," and they doubtless contribute their share towards public benefit. The dog, man's most faithful friend, so eulogized in song and story, has also, it seems, his part in public interest and concern. For many years the postal clerks of the country paid great attention to "Owney" an adventurous terrier dog who attached himself to the Railway Service and whose

exploits as a traveler and companion on many postal trips and runs made him a familiar and welcome acquaintance wherever he established his temporary domicile. His faithfulness, friendship and fellowship, in his way of showing it, was the topic of discourse when he made his occasional visits and his praises were told in many a newspaper story and he wore the numerous decorations and medals with which he was bedecked, the gift of admiring friends, with all the dignity and grace becoming a dog so honored and esteemed.

"Owney" had an humble imitator and counterpart in canine sagacity and wisdom in a dog at Mount Carmel, Pa., whose watchful guardianship of the office mail and general fidelity won him such deserved recognition at home as a remarkable example of what a dog can be taught to do, that his fame spread abroad, was brought to public attention at Washington and the post office people awarded him special recognition in the shape of a handsome collar, raised by subscription. He got his name in the newspapers, but whether all this honor and glory turned his head and his attention elsewhere, or some evil-minded person, jealous of the costly collar he wore, appropriated it and the dog also, is not known, but after being thus honored and decorated and set apart from the rest of the canine fraternity, this famous dog suddenly disappeared and was never heard of again.

#### Soldier's Sister a Mail Carrier

President Wilson has issued an executive order allowing the Postmaster General to appoint as temporary rural mail carrier, during the absence of the regular carrier on military duty, the person on whom the support of the dependents of the regular carrier devolves, without regard to civil service requirements, if the substitute is found competent. The first appointment under the order is that of Miss Edith Strand, of Princeton, Ill., whose brother was called into the military service, leaving her to care for the family.

#### Notice

In a pamphlet giving a brief history of the postal service, compiled by Mr. Stanley I. Slack during the administration of Postmaster General Charles Emory Smith from which a few general facts are taken relating to our early postal history, appears a statement that use had been made of the following works—Journal

kept by Hugh Finlay, 1773-74, Brooklyn, 1867. Joyce "History of the British Post Office; The Early History of the Colonial Post Office by Mary E. Wooley; Leech and Nicholson's History of the Post Office Department, Washington, 1879, and the contributions of the Postal History of the United States by C. W. Ernst of Boston in Vols. XX, 1895, and XXI, 1896; Journal of the Postal Union." As none of these authorities have been consulted in the publication of this work, or access had to any of them for such purpose, this explanation is made so that if anything from the above mentioned publications appears herein, drawn from Mr. Slack's pamphlet, the necessary acknowledgment might hereby be made and due credit given.

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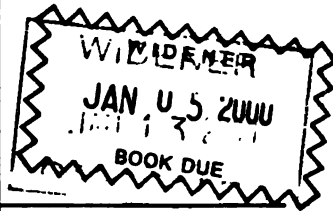


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